

PLANETARY ENDGAMES

# ADBUSTERS

*Spiritual  
Pollution*



US/CAN \$7.95 • UK £4.00 • ¥1400



VOL. 12 • NO. 5 MAR/APR 2006

**DUAL LOYALTIES**  
The Likudnik  
Presence  
in Washington

**MEET YOUR  
NEW MOMMY**  
Coming of Age  
with Androids

**A NEW MODEL  
FOR NON-PROFITS**  
Tackling the  
Marketplace for  
Social Change





Contestants pose during a modeling contest for kindergarten children in Xiamen, China.



WHAT CROW WOULD SAY TO THE DALAI LAMA

(1)

Do you come to this bloated madhouse,  
this bedlam  
to offer us palliatives  
or do you come here  
to help us  
break out of the asylum

(2)

So become a crow, Your Holiness  
that's right, become a crow

Make noise,  
make noise and wake the inmates of this  
vast corporate paradise

Flap your wings,  
flap your wings and startle  
the warden

Strike with your beak,  
for sure, strike with your beak,  
and warn of danger,  
warn of danger

That's what I have to say

*Stephen Raskin*



## UNIFORM

SO I WAS DRIVING PAST A HIGH SCHOOL in a large western Canadian town recently. It was just before 9:00 in the morning. We were in an '84 Subaru Estate filled with three unshaven young men heading to the crag to climb on rock under a bright blue autumn day. We slowed past the school – as the signs directed us. We gawked out of the window, each of us chewing on our own school memories.

Girls rolled their bums in low cut jeans. Goose pimples mid-drifts sent enticing signals to the noses of healthy young males – the bulk of whom ganged in disproportionate growth, together in small groups and pushing each other around in an attempt to diffuse their aching self awareness. They wore skate shoes, baggy jeans, big belts and most of them shaded their eyes under baseball hats. The majority of the kids wore similar outfits. Someone or something had convinced them that this was the look they should choose.

I imagined one boy's eye catching sight of a silvery elastic stalagmite of saliva stretching between the braced teeth of a young girl who was laughing inanely – humoring another, more popular girl – while doing her best to hide her anxiety about the spots around her mouth. The boy's penis took a rush of blood and he ploughed his hands into his jeans pockets just like many other boys, all pertaining to an air of the aloof. One boy – who never liked to remove his hat – stared at his friend Matt who spent 15 minutes each morning waxing and gelling his stylized messy hair and got all the chicks because of it. There was no way he could compete, he thought, at the same time eyeing Mr. Blake heading his way.

An English teacher, Mr. Blake was only 30. He wore stylishly subversive shirts with longer and wider collars than were currently available in stores. He liked to think he was

somehow communicating free and creative thinking to the sea of listless eyes that confronted him each Monday morning.

The kids – milling around outside this school in the throes of what is the most romantic, cock-aching time of one's life – ushered their bodies into the building where many of life's wares are discovered for the first time. Not only is school a churning mill for the institutionalized, it is itself an institution of provocation. A place where a child can be groomed to get a job with statutory holidays, taxes, insurance and pensions as well as a courtyard for a young person to become exposed to elements that may thwart the very direction he or she is being pushed in by the institution.

Now, in the UK where I grew up – North Wales to be exact – all kids attending school – comprehensive, primary, private, public – were required to wear uniforms. And we wore them, complaining we looked stupid and it was so boring and they didn't have to do it in AMERICA. Uniforms were the pits. My school's colors were gray and blue. Gray. Nine hundred gray children. A light gray V-neck sweater, blue shirt, school tie (gray and blue, with a taunting yellow strip, like the canned pineapples to the boiled vegetables) and dark gray slacks. Shoes not sneakers. None of the girls looked good, but realistically that was down to the local gene pool. Make-up was not tolerated. Markie Rowlands wore black jeans because he was in the rem block (the remedial block – where the holes in the plaster board were bigger). His mother couldn't afford gray slacks, sir. He was the hardest kid in the year and the hardest kid doesn't wear the uniform.

Madonna was responsible for a steady stream of girls waiting outside the head's office wearing eyeliner, a lace glove and leggings beneath their skirts. Most of them



came back to school the next day with their hair flat looking like they'd been dunked in a vat of gray polyester. But there was always something left – one shagging handle earring, inked graffiti on the back of a hand, or a sly smear of lippy after PE. That stupid uniform wasn't going to grind them down.

Granted, the bulk of those kids outgrew their little rebellious stands and took up their positions in the tax landscape; children of their own, Friday nights at the pub and one stressful Christmas after another. Until eventually nostalgia clouded the homogeneity and they found themselves reprimanding their own cracker spawn for listening to rap and calling Mr. Collins in geography, a bitch. What the uniform gave us, however, was something real and tangible to push against.

A physical injustice that gave rise to an awareness that we were being controlled. At least that theory was there for those of us who wanted to recognize it.

Cruising slowly past this very average Canadian high school then, with its very average teen behavior on display, it occurred to me that uniforms were a good thing. Precisely because they were a tangible symbol of control and I think they forced the kids who were more inclined that way to think outside the box, be more creative, more subversive. The fashion fodder was and will always be exactly that and they will keep

buying what's put on the shelves. And when I looked over these North American youth, it was all too apparent that they had their own uniform that came off the same shelves. They had nagged Mom and Dad in the mall for these jeans and that belt. They wanted the latest thing to look cool, to fit in, as of course we also did in and out of our glum uniforms. But the big difference is this: we were forced to look the same and these kids chose to look the same.

And as we passed this school and continued on our way, I realized I was glad for

the uniform at Ysgol Aberconwy and the way we provoked authority with our tie knots – some fat like cravats, some thin like rulers; the way we wore black jeans occasionally and told the teacher that

our school kecks were in the wash because the dog was sick on them, sir. It was something to be united in. Not as a strong, unified institution, but as group of young people with a common political point: that uniforms suck.

*Stewart Hughes is Welsh, living in British Columbia. He has a degree and no steady job and spends a good deal of time climbing. A German shepherd took a chunk out of his leg as a child and his favorite scene in Jaws is when they compare scars. He is 33 and can be reached at scoobh@hotmail.com*





Hatching fully grown from the factory molds in 1959, Barbie quickly set about amassing the world's most impressive toy empire, typically worth a couple of billion dollars a year to her parent company, Mattel. The sheer number of outfits alone is staggering.

Yet there are PVC clouds gathering on the horizon. In the past four years, Barbie sales flattened and then dropped sharply as a newer, "edgier" challenger for the "fashion doll sector" tiara eroded her market share. Investors have accused Mattel of complacency with their flagship brand. For now, she remains the number-one selling toy in the world, but the competition is getting fiercer – and *sparklier*.



Barbie's improbable proportions have no doubt attracted more censure than any other doll's in history. If Barbie were a real woman, the argument goes, she'd be a freak, her diminutive waist unable to support the weight of her own gargantuan chest. In the early '90s, researchers at University Central Hospital in Helsinki even concluded that a flesh-and-blood Barbie would lack the percentage of body fat needed to have regular periods. Although Mattel has always argued that The Great Blonde One's measurements are necessary to make her scaled-down frocks fit properly, they finally buckled to consumer demands in 1998 by slightly shrinking her bust and expanding her waist.

We are Lolitas  
Lollipop sluts  
Bubble-gum blowers  
Bratty little mutts.

Say the dolls dancing on TV.  
We know what they're saying  
It's what we want to be!

Strutting the mall  
Gum in cheek  
Thin hips, pouty lips  
Heroin chic.

Get out of my face  
You pathetic geek,  
I wanna grow up  
To be an acid freak!

When she debuted at the New York International American Toy Fair, Barbie was touted rather unsurprisingly as a "teen-age fashion model." Subsequently, the multi-talented doll went on to conquer literally hundreds of other occupations, including a stint as an Olympic athlete, a princess, a McDonald's employee, a firefighter, a paleontologist, a doctor, an astronaut...

In 1992, 2000, and again in 2004, Barbie even ran as a "Party for Girls" candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Her election bid failed.

In December 2005, research conducted at Bath University revealed a disturbing cultural phenomenon: girls, mainly aged seven to 11, delight in torturing and maiming their Barbies. "It's as though disavowing Barbie is a rite of passage and a rejection of their past," suggested Dr. Agnes Nairn. "The types of mutilation are varied and creative and range from removing the hair to decapitation, burning, breaking and even microwaving."



In just a few short years, the teenaged Bratz – “the only girls with a passion for fashion” – have gone from Nowheresville to serious contender status, racking up more than \$1-billion worth of sales for upstart toy company MGA Entertainment. Already outselling Barbies in certain markets by three to one, the mutant dolls are released in annual editions, effectively guaranteeing that year-old Bratz magically transform into harassment magnets for the poor kids whose parents won't shell out for the latest model.

The creators of Bratz attempted to sidestep any body image-related controversy by making the dolls in the distorted image of fairly flat-chested (though still svelte) teens. And given their extremely stylized features – the hydrocephalic skull, squid-like eyes and spindly legs that seem to continue up to sternum height – it's probably best not to even think about what would happen if one were to scale them up to human size. That said, it's hard to imagine that MGA Entertainment couldn't have foreseen the violent revulsion that most adults experience at the sight of these lacquer-lipped, eye-shadowed, ultra-mini-skirt-wearing children.

Think I'm just a little girl?  
Couldn't be more wrong!  
Don't believe me?  
Check out my thong!

Little girl panties  
On a pole.  
Little girl pictures  
On the police wall.

Down a pill  
Down a pill  
Down a pill against it

Down a pill  
Down a pill  
Maybe she'll come home.

*Maria Beliaeva*

As if unsatisfied with the nauseating blend of mid-pubescent sexuality and rapacious adolescent fantasy represented by the standard Bratz, MGA ramped up the stomach-churning confusion this past year by introducing Bratz Babies. Equally as tarted-up as their older counterparts – with the notable addition of bejewelled baby bottles and, on some models, thong underwear – these toddlers of ill repute have enjoyed brisk sales, despite having just barely mastered the arts of walking and putting on lip gloss. It's unlikely that doll-collecting pedophiles could account for any truly significant share of the sales.

Seeing as how they haven't yet reached the age of consent, not too much should be expected career-wise of the Bratz. That said, the girls have flirted with a number of possibilities, not the least of which being student, debutante, shopper, rock star and party girl. But mostly they just, like, you know, hang out!

Only time will tell if Bratz can succeed in tossing Barbie out on her anatomically-incorrect bum. But even if the upstarts prove to be nothing more than a flash in the pan, we can all rest assured that the plastic will hang around for millions of years to come.

*Clayton Dach*







**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** Kalle Lasn

**SENIOR EDITORS** Clayton Dach,  
Maria Hampton, Nicholas Klassen

**ART DIRECTOR** Valerie Thai

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR** Deborah Campbell

**CONTRIBUTING EDITOR** Andrew Fleming

**DESIGNER** Chris Sauvé

**CAMPAIGNS MANAGER** Tim Walker

**TECHNICAL MANAGER** Mark Rogers

**MOTION GRAPHICS DESIGNER** Mihai Wilson

**WEBSERVER ADMINISTRATOR** Patrick Gibson

**PROGRAMMING ASSISTANCE** Simon Davison

**SOCIAL MARKETING MANAGER** Leigh Ratcliff

**MEDIA RELATIONS/FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATE**  
Laura Fauth

**BLACKSPOT MARKETING MANAGER**

Sharon Cohen

**DOGSBODY** Julian Killam

**ACCOUNTS MANAGER/SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Gerry Bratz

**PROJECT COORDINATOR** Erika Kumar

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT** Brian Highley

**STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER** Dave Niddrie

**BLACKSPOT INTERN** Parry Malm

**OFFICE INTERN** Christian Thums

**VOLUNTEERS** George Atherton, Lauren Badyk,  
Danielle Bicknell, Suzanne Cowan,  
Simon Davison, Dave Duguay, Anne Ehrlich,  
April Ens, Vicki Heung, Masayuki Iwase,  
Clara Kuoch, Darren Negraeff,  
Marianne Papadopoulos, Helen Polychronakos,  
Dione Poole, Michael Rae, Alison Thompson,  
Vivian Wong

**PRINTING** Quad/Graphics

**NEWSSTAND DISTRIBUTION** Coast to Coast  
Newsstand Services

**ACCOUNTING** Kenn Lackner

**PUBLISHERS** Kalle Lasn, Bill Schmalz

#### TALK TO US

editor@adbusters.org

artdirector@adbusters.org

campaigns@adbusters.org

subscriptions@adbusters.org

Tel: 604.736.9401

Fax: 604.737.6021

1243 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver,  
British Columbia, V6H 1B7, Canada

For reprint permission, contact reprints@adbusters.

org. Portions of the magazine may be photocopied for  
educational purposes. Adbusters magazine is published

by Adbusters Media Foundation. GST# R127330082,

ISBN/ISSN 0847-9097. © Copyright 2005 by Adbusters Media  
Foundation. All Rights Reserved. Printed in the USA.



Whew. Ryan Taylor's Canada-bashing rant in your year-end issue was the most incoherent, self-exposing cry of pain I've read in a long time. He knows Canadian buttons and pushed most of them. But like most bullies, the abuse is a cover for insecurity, even despair. Standing back from the insults I have to say I feel sorry for him. He's aching with a desperate need to believe in his US heritage, even while he watches it go down the drain. It must be particularly hard to live in the capital of his discredited country.

JODY MORRISSEY  
*Vancouver, Canada*

No, Ryan Taylor, the world doesn't have the right to use the United States as a scapegoat. Nor did the US create all of the world's problems. What the world does blame you for is for making everything your business and for being so self-centered.

ANDREA SNIDER  
*Toronto, Canada*

When describing the "oh-so-ignorant fat American" tourist with his fanny pack, Ryan Taylor

reminded us that Americans are real people with real problems. Shit, sorry, we must have gotten so caught up in our enlightened, beautiful, problem-free, cancer-free Canadian lifestyles that we forgot.

Wake up buddy, we all have it tough.

EMILY O'CONNOR  
*North Bay, Canada*

I read the article in your year-end issue about China's "harmonious development" with considerable dismay.

A 100-ton benzene spill on the river at the city of Harbin recently left four million people without drinking water. Had it not been for a state of emergency declared by the Russians, Beijing would have continued to deny the problem.

China is an ecological disaster. Your author implies he has visited China and reads Chinese. Any visitor experiences pervasive coal dust air pollution and is told not to drink tap water anywhere. How could he be in China and not notice this?

DR. LEE RAINEY  
*St. John's, Canada*

How can Mark Anielski [Adbusters #63] sing China's praises for "harmonious development" when it is notorious for farming bears for their bile, trading in endangered species, and housing huge commercial fur farms – many of which are full of dogs and cats?

If China is a model for a sustainable future, I am greatly concerned.

GEMMA RICHARDSON  
*Ottawa, Canada*



I was surprised that amid all the apocalyptic predictions concerning diminishing water supplies and dwindling rainforests, a socially-minded magazine such as yours failed to mention perhaps the simplest, most effective, albeit still short-term, solution to many of the world's ills.

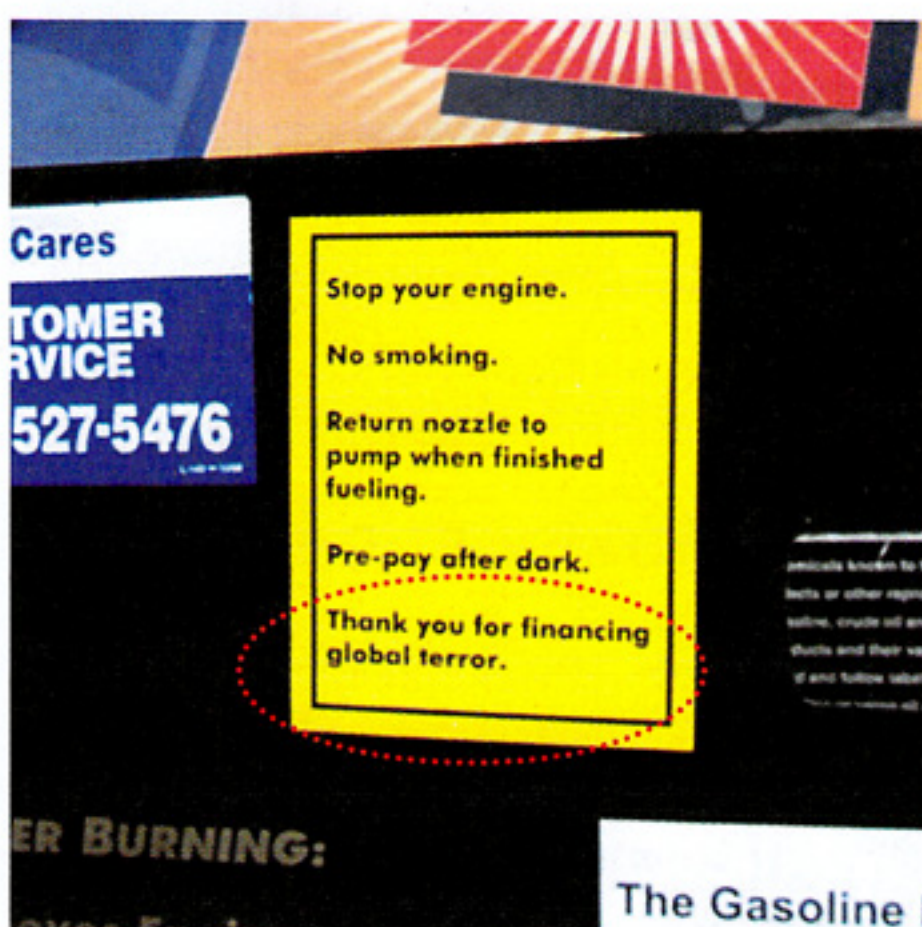
The average meat-eating American's diet requires 4,000 gallons of water a day. An average vegetarian diet requires 300 gallons. Factory farms in the US use more water than all other water consumers in the country combined.

A full 80 percent of American agricultural land goes to raising livestock, while 70 percent of the grains grown in the US feed livestock.

Those grains are a fully viable human food source, and could feed millions of hungry people around the world, but instead become steaks or chicken wings.

HEATHER O'CONNOR  
*via email*

I recently stayed up to watch a Discovery Channel show about global warming and the melting of the polar ice caps and was shocked to see them ignore the catastrophic effects, and proceed to show the benefits that will come once they're gone. They didn't mention that most of the planet would be underwater, because they were more interested in new trade routes across the Arctic Ocean and possibilities for oil exploration. I just watched, in open-jawed amazement. How could they present this crap as science? But just as I asked the question, the answer came. They cut to a commercial stating that



I found this at a gas station pump in San Francisco; a beautifully executed piece of civil disobedience.

ANDREW OLIVER  
*San Francisco, USA*

this program was brought to me by Conoco-Phillips, "where others see obstacles we see opportunity." Nothing more needed to be said.

JEREMY TROMBLEY  
*via email*

Lately I've been hearing, reading and seeing a lot about invasive predatory non-native species. Seaweeds, bark beetles, crabs, birds, killer bees – organisms of every sort that infest and decimate "native" resources and critters because of a lack of natural predators.

In most cases, humans are implicated in the introduction, whether by innocent accidental means or a deliberate lack of responsibility, which is fitting. I cannot help but find the parallels to non-native humans' own invasive, predatory history. It almost makes me laugh. Almost.

SEAN MATHIS  
*El Paso, USA*

Ever since the Iraq invasion, I've had a growing feeling that we need a credible and global news alternative that reaches out to the

general population. The world is constantly being misinformed by our main media sources. An accessible alternative would show people what is really happening in our world. I want to recommend that everyone who can, join the efforts of Independent World Television to build that alternative ([www.iwtnews.com](http://www.iwtnews.com)).

SEAN BOTHAM  
*via email*

Economics professors may be personable, even altruistic as Chris Fendrich points out in *Adbusters* #62. Yet as you highlight, the problem with economics – by which I mean academic economics – rests not with the character traits of individual practitioners but with the nature of the enterprise in its entirety. The latter is fundamentally rotten to the core and incapable of contributing to our understanding of society in any useful manner.

In fact, if academic economics was seen for what it was – an ideological instrument of the capitalist system – there is no way



that the values of any economists would be congruent with those that you espouse.

TUNG-YI KHO  
Kansas City, USA

My husband is a scientist writing about the correlation between Big Oil and our society's corruption. He gets depressed because he deals with the facts. But I believe we can create our own reality by what we do or don't do. People need to understand that we are running out of cheap energy.

We live in Kentucky in the midst of a poverty-stricken people blinded to their own power. We just got a cut-off notice for our natural gas service. In about an hour I have to go get financial help to make the payment we can't afford. Ironically it is through a program sponsored by the government, which means it's supported by people's taxes. The conglomerates that own our energy sources are going to make sure they get theirs one way or another.

It is almost like a nightmare from which we are having trouble waking.

ELIZABETH ANNE PFEIFFER  
Irvine, USA

We must stop our corporations from running amok, decimating our planet's resources, and psychopathically enabling humankind's addictions to over-consumption and overpopulation. But your recent article, "The Pandemic Clock is Ticking," [Adbusters #62] sounds just like what I hear from CNN, MSNBC, FOX, CBS, and ABC – all the newsmongers adept at stoking the fires of fear in the populace.

I would rather have read, "The Pandemic Clock is Ticking as it Should." After all, pandemics in any population serve a purpose innately tuned to supporting long-term survival of the species they strike. Pandemics help keep populations that have run amok in check, bringing them back in balance with their environments.

While I don't want people to die, and especially not to suffer

then die, I know we shall all die. Maybe it wouldn't be such a bad thing for Mother Earth if a quarter to half of the human population were taken out in one fell swoop. I know I'd much rather this "correction" be due to a modern-day "black death" than the other likely scenario, a "radiation death." Wouldn't you?

E.G. MEAD  
Vancouver, Canada

I enjoyed "Most Hated Company of the Year 2005" [Adbusters #63], particularly after watching the documentary *Walmart: The High Cost of Low Prices*.

I work in branding and consumer research. In a recent study of US shoppers, Walmart was named as America's most-liked retailer. I began looking for other studies and found that Walmart is regularly the shoppers' favorite.

I empathize with the sentiments in your article, and wish Walmart's appeal was connected to its social actions, but connecting likeability with social



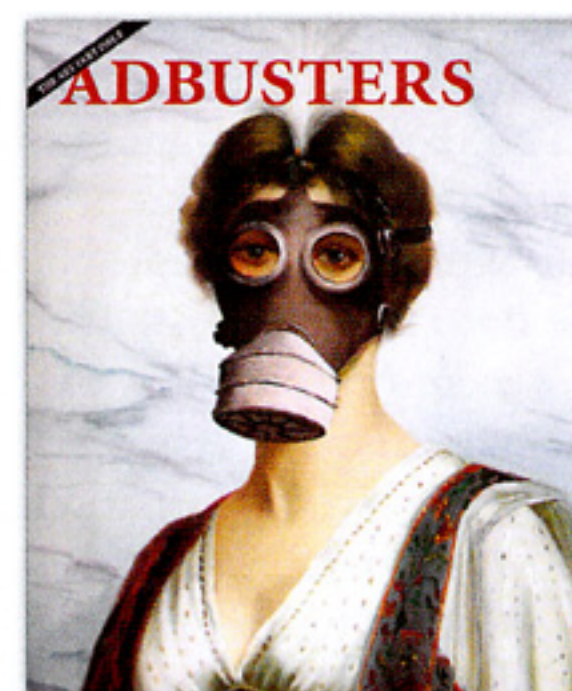
**#59 CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

An exploration of conflict contrasting the clenched fist with the open hand.



**#60 THE MEDIA LITERACY ISSUE**

Teachers can order single or bulk copies of this special issue at a discount rate.  
Email <laura@adbusters.org>.



**#61 ART FART**

A long, cold look at the shifting fortunes of art and commerce in a post-Warhol universe.



responsibility will require far more mental environmentalism.

HOWARD CAMPBELL  
*Bennington, USA*

Your inability to formulate a relevant critique of the global dominance of the commodity system is so tirelessly reproduced that anyone duped by this spurious and opportunistic brand of dissent will gain only the illusion that reforming capitalism is a relevant objective.

Yes, perhaps you will “rearrange the ugly face of corporate capitalism,” but replacing it with a “humanistic” form of the same socioeconomic organization will only exacerbate our boredom and apathy.

The ubiquitous logic of the commodity spares no one . . . your alternative lifestyles are our nightmares.

COMMISSAR EAMONN MCKAY  
*Psychogeographical  
Songwriters Association*

An interesting thing happened to me today. I was riding my bicycle up to the drive-up window of my local bank, when the attendant there stopped me, looked at my bike, and asked if I was “joking.”

“No, I’m not joking,” I said, “I’m conserving gas. It helps the planet and costs me less money.”

She just stared at me like I was crazy, as I continued to fill out my deposit slip.

Why can’t people understand that the planet is in crisis and that we need a new set of priorities?

ADAM AULER  
*Orange County, USA*

I remarked on my slight fear of heights the other day to a friend. His response: “You know, I think they have a pill for that now. You should look into it.”

BLAKE MURPHY  
*via email*

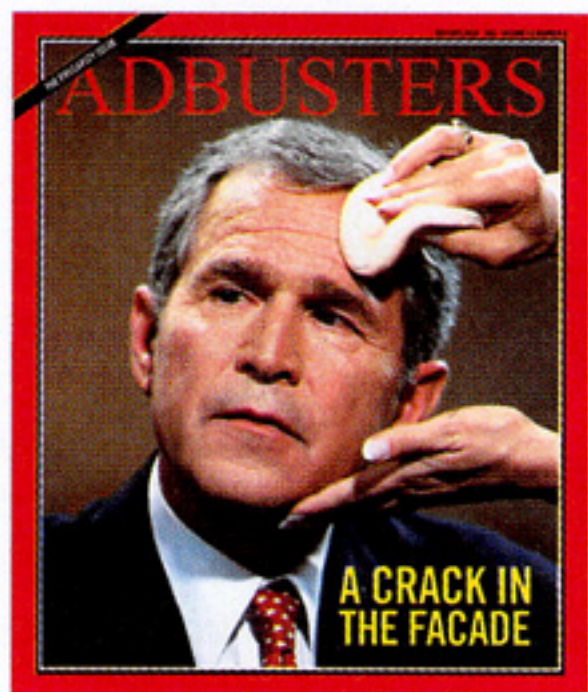
## WANTED: FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

To increase our on-the-ground coverage of global issues in 2006, Adbusters is looking to recruit foreign journalists from across Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. If you’re a hardened wordsmith with a thirst for unreported global stories and think you have what it takes, we want to hear from you.

Send resumés, covering letters and samples of your work to [editor@adbusters.org](mailto:editor@adbusters.org)

### LETTERS

EMAIL: [editor@adbusters.org](mailto:editor@adbusters.org)  
FAX: 604.737.6021  
MAIL: 1243 West 7th Avenue  
Vancouver BC, Canada V6H 1B7



**#62 A CRACK IN THE FACADE**  
Creative responses to the anxiety and precariousness of 21st-century living.



**#63 BIG IDEAS 2006**  
A survey of the cultural, political, technological and environmental shifts to watch out for this year.

### THREE PAINLESS WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE:

- ONLINE at [adbusters.org](http://adbusters.org).
- CALL toll-free:  
1.800.663.1243 (North America)  
or 604.736.9401.
- MAIL the postage-paid card inside this issue.



## 50 WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR LOVER

EVERYBODY KNOWS BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO. Once upon a time it was considered cowardly to call it quits with someone in a letter, phone message or any way other than face-to-face. Not anymore – at least not in England – where, for a mere £4, people can pay a celebrity to do the dirty deed for them in a video message sent to the breakup victim's cellphone.

Athletes, actors and musicians – even Boy George – have pre-recorded 20-second “You’re Dumped” videos sold by [celebritymessages.com](http://celebritymessages.com). The nastiest one comes from a TV announcer named Vernon Kay, who calls the dumpee a “loser” and “a bag of shite.” Vinnie Jones, a former soccer star who now plays tough guys in films, breaks the news by

saying, “I don’t really know how to say this, but I will. You’re dumped! All right? Out!” Boy George suggests, “Now you can find someone with a decent-sized penis,” while one by soccer player Ian Wright, noting that a video message is an impersonal way to break up, goes on to say, “Don’t give me that ‘Couldn’t even do it in person.’ I got a message. ‘You deserve it.’” The website’s operators advertise their “cheeky” videos as “intended to be used in a fun and novel way. The ability to have a genuine celebrity deliver messages to friends and family has never been available before.”

Perhaps for good reason.

*Andrew Fleming*



This is an industry, it's a business. We exist to make money. We exist to put commercials on the air. The programming that is put on between those commercials is simply the bait we put in the mousetrap.

*– retiring ABC news anchor  
Ted Koppel on advertising  
in the news business*

### CELL PHONE COME ONS

Tokyo billboards are becoming barcodes as marketers dial into cell-phone ad campaigns. Accustomed to living their lives through their handsets – from paying for cans of Coke at high-end vending machines to using GPS to navigate through labyrinthine city streets – Japan’s 88 million cell-phone users are now being recruited into major corporations’ brand-building exercises.

Mobile-ad spending is expected to hit \$680 million by 2009, the nation’s biggest service provider DoCoMo has its own agency, D2 Communications, and the first wave of ads are already starting to change the urban landscape. Billboard posters with Quick Response codes – iconic black and white encryptions that can be read by cell-phone cameras like barcodes – are springing up in high-traffic areas like Shinjuku and the Ginza directing users to company’s websites for coupons and competitions.

More than 670,000 people recently called in to watch two short films for Nestlé iced coffee.

### THE EVOLUTION OF PRODUCT PLACEMENT

Eagle-eyed viewers of the CBS sitcom *Yes, Dear* might have spotted the box of Club Crackers on a living room coffee table. What they weren’t to know, according to *The New York Times*, was that the box wasn’t on set when the show was taped. It was added afterwards by virtual product placement pioneer, Marathon Ventures, which uses digital graphics and editing to insert anything from potato chips and soda to shopping bags

during post-production.

Marathon’s “digital brand integration” enables producers to sell spots even after filming is complete, and advertisers to recapture consumers skipping commercials using digital TV recorders. Future possibilities include introducing newer and more numerous product placements into reruns, and multiple contracts putting different brands in a movie’s theatrical release, DVD and TV versions.



## COMMERCIALS TO SAVE COMMERCIALS

"Enjoy CM!" an urgent voice shrieks from the TV screen. Since August 2005, this "commercial for commercials" has been broadcast during primetime on Japan's TV networks. According to [www.enjoy-cm.com](http://www.enjoy-cm.com), the 133 broadcasting companies that make up the National Association of Commercial Broadcasters (NAB) started this three-year campaign due to the fact that "people are becoming desensitized to commercials because they are inundated with them." Go figure. So the NAB decided to make more commercials to tell people to pay better attention. After all, "commericals have a strong influence. They do not only deliver corporate messages but also make trends and culture."

Twisted logic? It gets better. In one of the six spots, a pop star asks her doll, "Don't they force you to say that commercials are fun?" To which the doll replies, "Fuff, well of course." In another spot, a famous TV commentator happily tells the audience they are exposed to 20,000 new commercials a year. Nevermind that that's the reason nobody cares anymore. In each case, the spots always finish with a strong and clear order: "Enjoy commercials!"

Some reports suggest that NAB embarked on this campaign because of the commercial-skipping function on recent-model TVs. The Internet is doubtless another major culprit. NAB seems to be fighting a losing battle with the same old weapons. Old-style, big-media industry can't come up with anything better than this kind of tragic enlightenment. So if you manage to see one of their "Enjoy CM" spots, watch carefully – you may hear the "forget-me-not requiem" in the background.

A.K.



I am a Norwegian student,  
and right now I feel very angry.

I went to the cinema tonight  
and before the movie they showed  
a commercial for H&M called  
nothing less than "Romeo and  
Juliet." The ad used some of  
the strongest symbols of our  
culture to try to make connections  
in my mind between the brand  
H&M and things like love, death  
and Shakespeare.

*Adbusters, you have a job to do!*

KJELL ARNE HELGEBOSTAD  
Trondheim, Norway

A couple of years ago I managed to eliminate  
98 percent of the advertising-related  
aggravation in my life, and I'd like to share  
how I did it.

1. I subscribed to XM Radio so that, for a  
reasonable monthly fee, I can enjoy a fantastic  
variety of music, completely commercial-free.

2. I bought a digital video recorder so that  
I can pre-record any program, and then fast-  
forward through all commercials.

3. I subscribed to HBO because it has no ads.

The total monthly cost of this tranquility:  
\$31.92, or about a dollar a day. My solution  
obviously does little to rid our whole culture  
of advertising. It is only an individual-level  
solution, but it has significantly improved  
my life.

BRYAN CAPLAN  
Fairfax, USA



## SPONSORED EDITORIALS, CANADIAN STYLE

AS IT GETS MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT TO MAKE money in the magazine business, the so-called “wall” meant to separate editorial and advertising content is finding itself increasingly under siege.

The latest broadside against journalistic integrity comes from Ken Whyte, editor-in-chief of Canada’s once-illustrious weekly newsmagazine *Macleans*. For several months *Macleans* has been running a series of special reports on “The New Canadian Establishment” – essentially flattering profiles of successful immigrant businessmen who are themselves potential advertisers – by star columnist Peter C. Newman and “brought to you by Cadillac.”

Although it’s a clear violation of the Canadian Society of Magazine Editors rulebook – which states that “an advertiser’s name or logo may not be used on any editorial pages to suggest advertising sponsorship of those pages” – Whyte defends his hucksterism for General Motor’s flagship gas-guzzler as ethical because the advertisers weren’t allowed to interfere with the pieces. He insisted to *Masthead* magazine that “lack of editorial interference by an advertiser is of paramount concern,” and stressed that Newman had no advance knowledge as to who would be underwriting his words.

Perhaps, but it’s hard not to suspect that *Macleans* will now be disinclined to write something critical of GM given their cozy relationship. Whyte’s decision to allow sponsored editorials is inescapably contrasted with the route taken by Kim Pittaway, editor of the Canadian women’s magazine *Chatelaine*. Pittaway recently resigned in protest when asked to do something similar by her bosses at Rogers Communications – the same folks who own *Macleans*. In this case, Home Depot was

allowed to “present” an editorial package on decks and patios, with advertorial spreads that were nearly identical to the “real” stories. The retail giant’s ads were even listed in the table of contents. To top it off, this new sales gimmick won a prize at this year’s Media Innovation Awards, an annual event put on by – you guessed it – Rogers itself.

Meanwhile, Chrysler, one of GM’s main competitor’s, has just announced a four-year deal with *Time* magazine to be the “presenting sponsor” of the annual Person of the Year issue. Good luck seeing a conservationist or whistleblower get the nod during the auto manufacturer’s watch. If the church-state division between editorial and sales can still be considered a wall, there’s little doubt the writing is on it.

Andrew Fleming

### us of Big Win for Kazakhstan President in Peaceful Election



**By N. K. K. K.**  
Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev has won a landslide victory in the presidential election held on December 4. He received 95.5 percent of the vote, according to the official results. This marks his fourth consecutive term in office. The election was held in a peaceful atmosphere, with no reports of violence or fraud. Nazarbayev's victory was expected by many, given his long tenure and the support of the military and police. His main opponent, Akezholzhan Maskeev, received 4.5 percent of the vote. The election results were announced by the Central Election Committee of Kazakhstan.

**Party Leads in Council Vote**  
The ruling party, the Nur Otan party, has won a decisive victory in the recent parliamentary elections. It secured 81 out of 100 seats in the Mäjilis, the lower house of the Kazakh Parliament. This victory allows the party to continue its leadership in the government. The opposition parties, including the Amanat party, received a total of 19 seats. The election was held in a fair and transparent manner, with all major parties participating.

**Flight 1000 Rescued Missing**  
A commercial flight from Kazakhstan to Russia, Flight 1000, has been safely landed after a two-hour search. The aircraft, a Boeing 737, was reported missing on December 3. It was carrying 120 passengers and crew. The search was led by the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations. The plane was found in the Black Sea, off the coast of Russia. All passengers and crew were rescued and are being treated for minor injuries. The cause of the crash is still under investigation.

### Disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle

**Team of Bermuda Triangle Experts Created**

A team of experts has been created to investigate the mysterious disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle. The team, led by a former NASA scientist, will study the area and attempt to identify the causes of the incidents. The Bermuda Triangle is a region in the western part of the North Atlantic Ocean where a large number of ships and aircraft have disappeared. The team will use satellite data and other information to analyze the area. They will also conduct field research and interviews with witnesses. The goal is to provide a comprehensive report on the phenomenon.

**Flight 19: 60th Anniversary**  
The 60th anniversary of the disappearance of Flight 19, a US Navy patrol bomber, is being commemorated. The flight disappeared on December 17, 1945, while on a routine mission. The aircraft was last seen by a search plane, and its fate remains unknown. The anniversary is being marked by a series of events, including a reenactment of the flight and a search for the wreckage. The Bermuda Triangle is a region of mystery and intrigue, and the disappearance of Flight 19 is one of the most famous incidents.

**Search for the Lost Ship**  
A search for the lost ship, the USS Cyclops, is underway. The ship disappeared in 1918, and its location has been a mystery ever since. A team of divers and researchers is searching for the wreck in the Bermuda Triangle. The ship was a cargo ship that was carrying a large amount of scrap metal. It was last seen by a search plane, and its fate remains unknown. The search is being funded by the US Navy and the private sector. The goal is to recover the ship and its cargo, and to determine the cause of the disappearance.

**Investigation into the Disappearance of Flight 1000**  
An investigation into the disappearance of Flight 1000 is ongoing. The flight disappeared on December 3, 2002, while on a routine mission. The aircraft was last seen by a search plane, and its fate remains unknown. The investigation is being led by the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations. They are using satellite data and other information to analyze the area. They will also conduct field research and interviews with witnesses. The goal is to provide a comprehensive report on the phenomenon.

### Iran's President Gives Parliament Fourth Nominee for Oil Minister

**Legislators say they want to see him before they decide**  
Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has nominated a fourth candidate for the position of Oil Minister. The candidate is a former member of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The nomination is being debated in the Islamic Consultative Assembly. Legislators are expressing concerns about the candidate's background and his potential impact on the oil industry. They want to see the candidate before making a decision. The nomination is part of a series of appointments made by the president. The oil industry is a key sector of the Iranian economy, and the appointment of a minister is a significant event.

### African Bank Chief Chosen as Interim Prime Minister of Ivory Coast

A former head of a major African bank has been chosen as the interim Prime Minister of the Ivory Coast. The candidate is a prominent businessman and a member of the opposition. He was appointed by the President of the Ivory Coast. The appointment is seen as a move to bring stability to the country. The Ivory Coast has been experiencing political and economic challenges in recent years. The new Prime Minister is expected to lead the government and implement reforms. The appointment is a significant event in the country's history.

### \$1.2 Billion Deal for Swedish Company

A Swedish company has secured a \$1.2 billion deal for a major project in Africa. The project involves the construction of a large dam and a power plant. The deal was signed by the Swedish company and the government of the host country. The project is expected to create thousands of jobs and generate significant revenue for the host country. The Swedish company is a leading firm in the construction industry. The deal is a major achievement for the company and a significant event in the host country's economic history.

A SCI FI CHANNEL ORIGINAL MINISERIES  
PREMIERES TONIGHT AT 9/8C  
SCI.FI.COM/TRIANGLE

If you look carefully at this double page *New York Times* spread from December 5, you might see some news content. But mostly, you'll see graphic intrusion. It's sad that one of the most illustrious newspapers in the world has sold out this way. "All the news that's fit print" – as long as it doesn't get in the way of the ads.



## THE PENTAGON'S INFORMATION WAR

A parable found in the book of Matthew tells the tale of two builders: one built a house on rock, the other on sand, and then it rained. "By helping Iraqis build a lasting democracy," US President George Bush noted in a January speech, "we're laying the foundation of peace for generations to come."

But what kind of foundation can be built on million-dollar lies purchased by US taxpayers and planted in Iraqi newspapers? Last December, the US military was caught operating a secret program designed to infiltrate the fledgling Iraqi press with propaganda disguised as independent journalism. The Pentagon hired communications firm Lincoln Group to translate spun news reports written by so-called "information operations troops" into Arabic and place them in local newspapers. Lincoln Group staff convinced editors and reporters to publish the concocted reports by flashing wads of US dollar bills while posing as freelance journalists or ad execs. In addition, the US military purchased an Iraqi newspaper and a radio station to augment their covert communications program, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. A senior Pentagon official critical of the tactic told the *Times*, "We're breaking all the first principles of democracy when

we're doing it,"

Perhaps the most damning accusation, however, involves that bane of American efforts to win hearts and minds, Aljazeera. In 2001, a US smart bomb destroyed an Aljazeera office in Afghanistan and in 2003 the outlet's Baghdad correspondent was killed by US missiles. Then, last November, Britain's *Daily Mirror* reported on a leaked secret memo describing a White House meeting with PM Tony Blair where Bush suggested bombing the headquarters of Aljazeera in Qatar. Two British government officials are facing charges under the Official Secrets Act in connection with the leak.

All of this comes after Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld complained in a 2004 speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors that the US media under-reported the emergence of a "free press" in Iraq. "Truth prevails," he insisted. "Just a few years ago your contemporaries in Iraq and Afghanistan were jailed and tortured and killed if they had the courage to report the news as they saw it."

And what about today?

Jorge Barrera



Conrad Black's alleged exploits as former newspaper magnate and chief executive of Hollinger Inc. are rapidly becoming the stuff of legend – not to mention a forthcoming television movie and a dozen or so criminal charges in US federal court. Even if he does manage to avoid a possible 95-year prison sentence, Black will continue to serve as an object lesson in why it's not a good idea to allow so few to control so much (hint: it's because some people turn out to be crooks). For Canada's sake, let us all hope that Leonard Asper – current President and CEO of CanWest Global, which owns most of Black's old media properties – turns out to have a bit more integrity. Given CanWest's growing reputation for having its own unique approach to the truth, we're not holding our breath.





### GOT BULLIES?

Then get a new attitude, argues controversial school psychologist Izzy Kalman.

The New York therapist has turned bullying upside down, arguing that it's the victim mentality fostered by anti-bullying programs that's the real problem.

Citing Canadian psychologist David Smith's findings that such programs ranged from being mildly helpful to outright detrimental, Kalman argues that it is simply political correctness to say that bullying is not the victim's fault.

"Science understands every action affects everything else," he said, "Just because victims have no idea how they're causing their problem doesn't mean they've nothing to do with the way they're being treated."

I am a teaching assistant at a university in Oklahoma. Today, I showed my class four ads from the [adbusters.org](http://adbusters.org) website ("What was that bump?," "Riders wanted," and the video clips "Unbrand America" and "Buy Nothing Day"). I asked the students to write responses to each ad to tell me what they thought. Their responses were mixed.

My heart sank as I read one student's comments on the Buy Nothing Day video: "I could never change my lifestyle. There has to be someone to be the one to produce the most trash. It's a direct relation with having so much money to buy stuff. I am perfectly fine with the way we live. If the US is #1 in everything, we rule the world."

Another student had this to say: "I think the meaning of this message was that Americans are greedy and over-consumers and it is affecting our environment."

While many really didn't get the point of the clip, the one student did, and that to me is worth it.

AMMON GEE  
Stillwater, USA

## Media Literacy Kit



Teachers – Inspire your students to break out of the media-consumer trance and start creating their own meaning. The Adbusters Media Empowerment Kit is a grab bag of readings, discussion starters, activity ideas, posters, and hand-outs. The kit also includes a CD of music and the new Production of Meaning DVD. Designed as a flexible teachers' aid that can be used in exciting ways with your current curriculum. Show your students how to jump over the great divide between passive consumption and the empowered production of meaning!

CDN/USA \$125.00 PLUS SHIPPING  
**PRE-ORDER NOW**

ONLINE: [WWW.ADBUSTERS.ORG](http://WWW.ADBUSTERS.ORG)

PHONE: 1-800-663-1243 USA/CANADA

00-800-663-12430 EUROPE/AUSTRALIA

800-663-12430 ELSEWHERE





## CLASH OF CULTURES



### UNESCO ADOPTS NEW PLAN AGAINST CULTURAL INVASION

THIS PAST OCTOBER, AFTER TWO YEARS OF HEATED debate, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) members voted overwhelmingly in favor of a convention to protect cultural diversity. The pact asserts that cultural expressions are “distinctive” and allows countries “to maintain, adopt, and implement policies and measures that they deem appropriate for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions on their territory.”

Great Britain’s ambassador to the UN agency summed up the exuberance of the occasion by noting “This is a great day for UNESCO.” But not everyone was so chipper. While 148 delegates voted in favor of the convention, there were conspicuous ‘no’ votes from the US and – not to be outdone on the anti-UN front – Israel. The opposition was not surprising given that the US had only recently returned to UNESCO after opting out of the organization for nearly two decades because of its perceived anti-American bias.

Despite their return, American representatives are unable – or unwilling – to grasp the importance

other nations place on protecting their cultures from the vagaries of free trade. Stateside, right-wing commentator George Will called the convention “a pernicious idea executed about as you would expect it to be by people capable of conceiving it.” In Paris, US ambassador to UNESCO Louise Oliver complained to the Associated Press, “This is supposed to be a convention to promote cultural diversity and I’m really, as I say, disappointed that the discussion of this convention from Canada seems to be entirely in terms of its relationship to trade.”

But that trade component is what it’s all about. Governments should not have to apologize for defending their cultural sectors against the wave of homogenizing pressures from foreign competition. France and Canada in particular have long been championing “cultural exemption” clauses in trade agreements. Now, they have the weight of global consensus behind them. Cultural expressions are different than widgets. They should be protected accordingly.

*Janneken Drange*



## MOOD DISORDERS

Nearly every issue of *Adbusters* includes a letter from someone criticizing your take on psychiatric illness and the use of medications to control mood. I want to thank you for not backing down on this point.

When I was an infant, my mother was forcibly taken into a state psychiatric institution where she was subjected to ECT treatment and held against her will for six years. She died while institutionalized.

I lived my entire life in a shadow of fear of having a similar fate. I scrutinized my every emotion for signs of psychiatric illness. At age 23, while in the stressful situation of medical school, I started on antidepressants (which did nothing to improve my mood but had horrible side effects) and some psychiatric care. After three years of treatment, I was given a label of a personality disorder. Officially, I was damaged goods. So I had to lie on my various applications for residency programs, my medical license, my board certification. After I finished my residency, I stopped psychiatric care and all medications. I felt fine for about eight years until a break-up spun me into an acute, deep depression. I was then convinced to seek psychiatric care again and began an intensive therapy that did little except sedate my various agitated states. I spent lots of time sitting on my couch feeling 85 years old and waiting for death. After tens of thousands of dollars and what was by psychiatric standards successful treatment, I realized that I was actually worse off

after all this treatment and medication than I was in the eight years of no treatment. This realization lifted a heavy weight from my shoulders. The psychiatric emperor has no clothes.

I decided to quit my job, stop my psychiatric care and take myself off all the medications. I had a very remarkable suicidal episode almost immediately, but luckily I decided to wait it out. It's now eight months later, the best eight months of my life when it comes to my emotional health.

Psychiatric diagnoses are totally subjective, they make them up and vote on them. There is still no evidence at all of any differences between "normal" brains and those from people with psychiatric "illness." Certainly there is a place for temporarily numbing out on medications for people in psycho-emotional pain, but let's call it what it is and not lie and say we are "correcting a chemical imbalance in the brain."

No such thing exists. There is certainly a place for good therapy, an empathetic, wise listener (also found in places of worship and good friends).

In my 46 years on this earth, I've had at least three major depressions and plenty of suicidal thoughts. My advice: if giving presentations at work freaks you out, quit and get a job that doesn't freak you out. If you dread going to parties, don't call it the psychiatric disease of social phobia and take neurotoxins to poison your brain. Instead, just don't go to parties. Do something one-on-one with people instead, find some walking buddies or go to the movies. If you find yourself in a deep depression, *force* yourself to call your friends, take a walk, eat, and find something to be grateful for. The illness is not in the brain of those with mood "disorders," it's in the culture that we need to change.

A. SMITH  
Portland, USA

I am diagnosed with Bipolar 1 and believe that I have "special powers" – though my doctor would want to give me more meds for saying that. And even though I know that mental illness is a bleak existence for most, I truly believe that a revolution is drawing near, a time where we can use our special powers, our magical insights, our artistic abilities, to erect change and heal the Earth.

APRIL BROOK MONROE  
Cambridge, USA

I am currently on six different medications: Epival (an anti-epileptic which is also prescribed for bipolar), Ritalin (which increases concentration), Wellbutrin (an anti-depressant), Zyprexa (an anti-psychotic), Zopiclone (a sleeping pill) and generic Zantac (which I need because the other drugs are hard on my stomach). Without these medications I would soon become floridly psychotic. Sure, my manic episodes have their fun times, and I write my cleverest poetry when I am hypomanic. But without meds, I would become a danger to myself and a menace to society.

JORDON GOWANS  
Victoria, Canada





# TV TURNOFF WEEK

## APRIL 24 - APRIL 30 2006

**1. Take the personal plunge:**

Don't think you're addicted to TV? Then why not prove it by going cold turkey for a week? You'd be surprised how difficult it can be to disconnect – and what a profound week of self discovery it can be.

**2. Take it to the classroom:**

Students all across the world have been taking part in the big annual switch off. This year, whether you're a teacher or a student, why not get your school to join them? Find out how at [www.tvturnoff.org](http://www.tvturnoff.org).

**3. Hone your activist edge:**

Now you don't have to stay at home and keep your sofa warm. Make TV Turnoff Week a tube-smashing success with some unscripted activism: poster, dream up some street theatre, or team up and go on a TV-B-GONE pub crawl.

**WWW.ADBUSTERS.ORG**



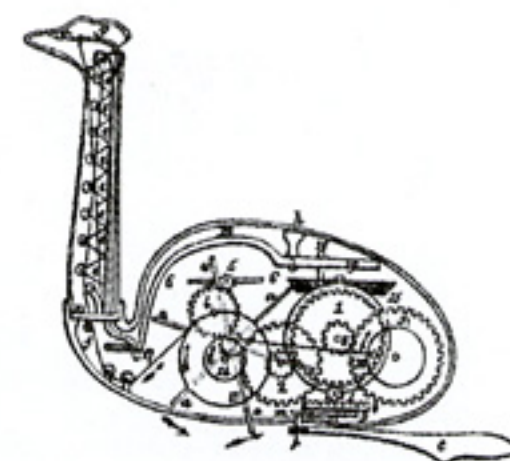


**c250 BCE**

Ctesibius, an Alexandrian engineer and mathematician, makes musical organs and water clocks that incorporate animated figures, some of the first recorded examples of primitive robotics.

**1495**

Leonardo Da Vinci designs a clockwork man in the image of an armored knight. The mechanical knight could in theory sit up, wave its arms, and twist its head while opening and closing its mouth. It is not known if any attempt was made to build to device, but other medieval inventors would follow suit with similar machines designed to amuse royalty.



**1737**

French engineer Jacques de Vaucanson begins designing a series of elaborate clockwork automata. He first premieres a flautist that can perform a dozen-tune repertoire; his work culminates with The Digesting Duck, an anatomically correct fowl that could walk, quack, flap its wings and even eat, digest, then defecate.

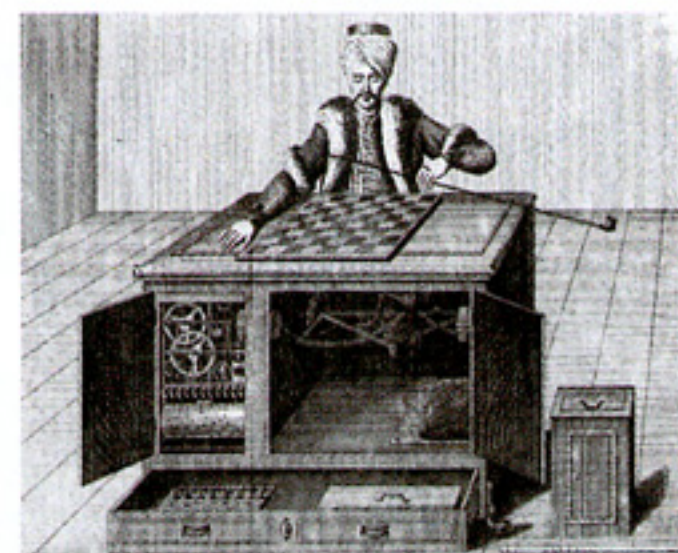
**1206**

Badi Al-Zaman Abull-Ezz Ibn Ismail Ibn Al-Razzaz Al-Jazari completes *Automata*, a handsomely-illustrated treatise on the advanced state of mechanized technologies in the Islamic world.



**1662**

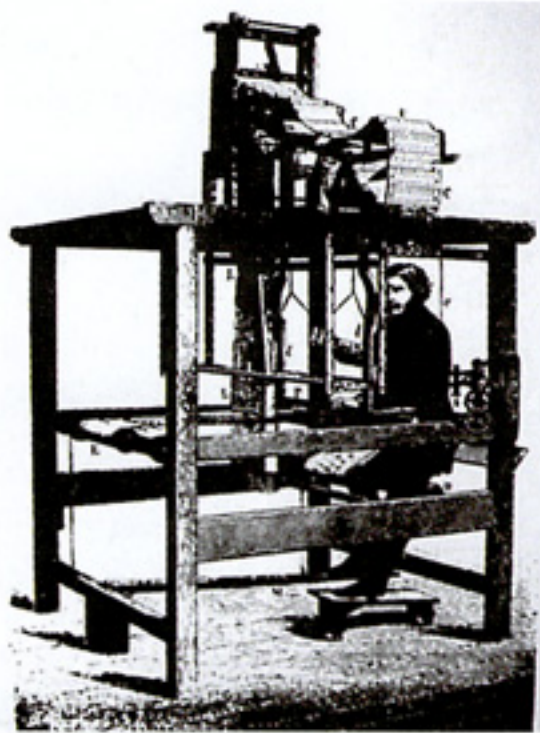
Takeda Omi opens the Takeda-Za mechanized puppet theatre in Osaka. His creations were both clockwork- and water-driven, taking advantage of the theater's position next to the Dotonbori canal.



**1769**

Created by Wolfgang von Kempelen, a chess-playing, turban-wearing automaton called The Turk embarks on a tour of the courts of Europe, trouncing such illustrious opponents as Benjamin Franklin and Napoleon Bonaparte. In fact, the automaton is an elaborate hoax, a sophisticated puppet controlled by a series of chess masters from inside its cabinet.



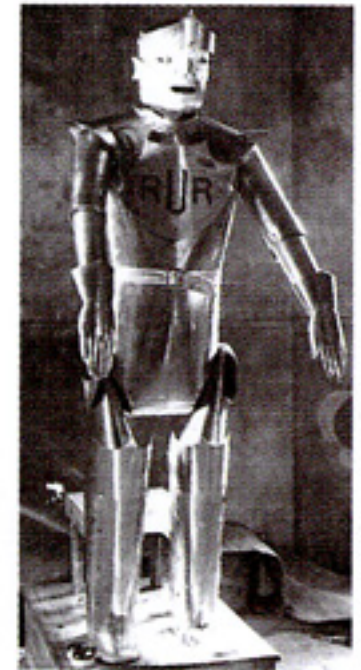


**1805**

Based on an earlier design by Jacques de Vaucanson, Joseph-Marie Jacquard debuts the world's first programmable device: an automated weaving loom controlled by hole-punched paper cards. The invention was met with fierce resistance from weavers.

**1822**

Charles Babbage begins designing the initial version of his "difference engine," the first mechanical programmable computer, to aid in the calculation of numerical tables. Although he failed due to personal reasons to produce a fully functional version of the engine, a two-and-a-half-ton working version of the machine was completed in 1991 according to his original plans.



**1921**

Czech playwright Karel Capek stages *RUR*., the story of a group of synthetic humans that are liberated from a life of compulsory labor. The engineered creatures are dubbed "Robots," derived from the Czech word for "servitude."

**1818**

Mary Shelley writes *Frankenstein*, a scientific reformulation of the golem legend, in which the maker of an artificial man is unable to control his creation.



**1912**

The Spanish mathematician and engineer Leonardo Torres y Quevedo invents an automated chess-playing machine, *El Ajedrecista*. A sensation when it debuts at the Paris World Fair of 1914, *El Ajedrecista* uses electromagnets to play a king and rook endgame without any human intervention.



**1927**

A treacherous android named Maria becomes the first cinematic robot in Fritz Lang's dystopic "Metropolis."

**1936**

Alan Turing, a British mathematician and logician, paves the way for modern computing when he introduces a theoretical computer called the Turing Machine. Along with Alonzo Church, he also puts forth the theory that all problems that a human can solve can be reduced to a set of computational algorithms.



**1941**

Isaac Asimov makes the claim that one day "robotics" will be a massive field of research. He goes to work on three laws to govern robot behavior, publishing them the following year in the story "Runaround":

1. A robot may not injure a human, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey orders from human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

**1951**

Marvin Minsky and Dean Edmonds construct SNARC, the first "learning" machine to use principles culled from biological neural networks.

**1955**

American computer scientist John McCarthy coins the term "Artificial Intelligence."

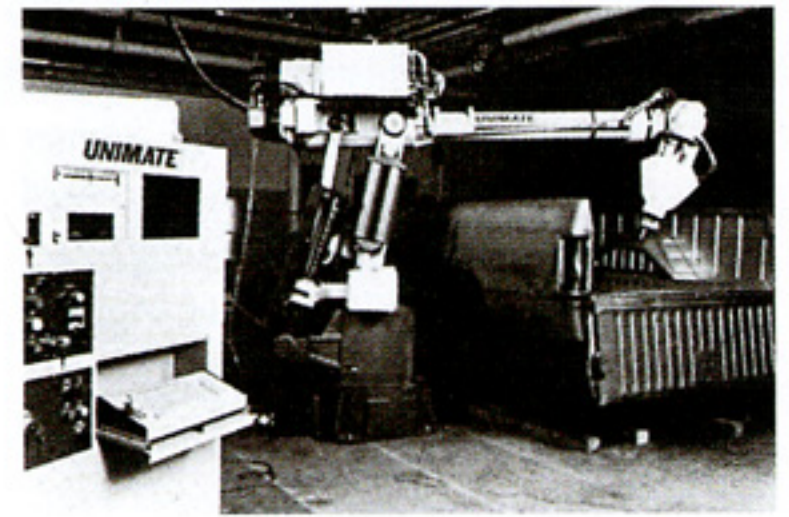


**1957**

Arthur Samuel writes a checkers-playing program that learns from its past mistakes. It quickly learns how to beat Samuel at the game. In 1961, it manages to beat the fourth-ranked checkers player in the United States.

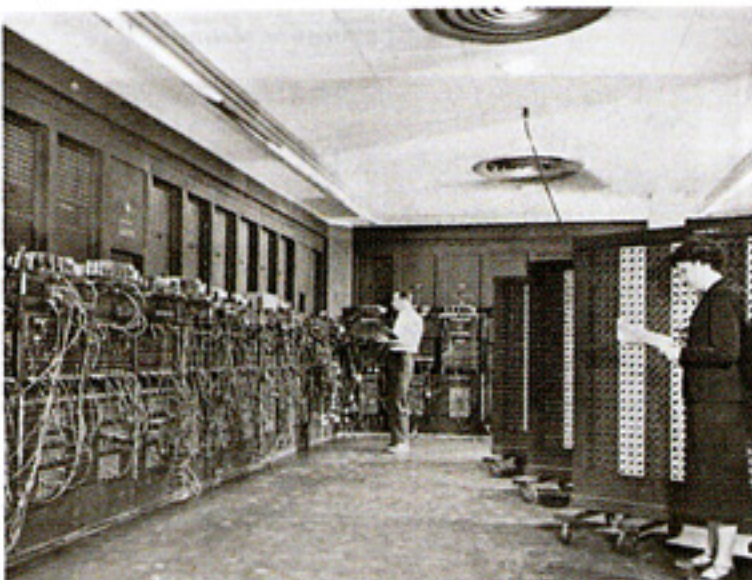
**1961**

UNIMATE, the first industrial robot is activated in a General Motors factory in Trenton, New Jersey. Following step-by-step by commands read from a magnetic drum, the robotic arm moves and stacks hot pieces of die-cast metal.



**1945**

John W. Mauchley and J. Presper Eckert switch on ENIAC – Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer – the first general-purpose, fully electronic programmable computer. The hulking machine contained 17,468 vacuum tubes and about five million hand-soldered joints, weighing in at around 27,000 kilos.



**1950**

Alan Turing proposes a test to determine whether or not a machine is able to think. The test involves a human judge conversing in writing with two other parties, one human and the other a machine. If the judge cannot determine which is which, then the machine is deemed to have passed.

**1965**

Herbert Simon predicts that machines will be capable of doing any work that a man can do by 1985.

**1956**

The first artificial intelligence program, dubbed Logic Theorist, is demonstrated at the Carnegie Institute of Technology.

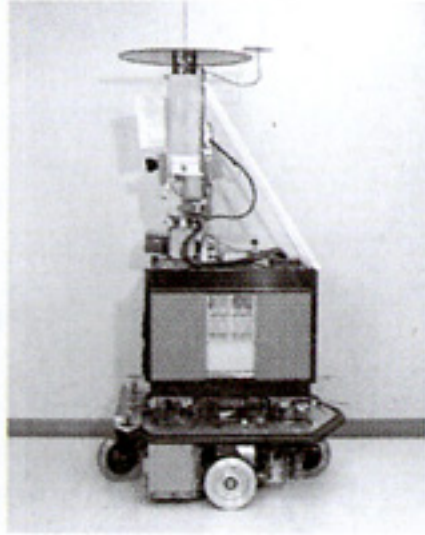
**1956**

Unimation, Inc – the world's first robotics company – is founded. The company initially develops a materials-handling robot, followed by robots for welding.



**1966**

Work begins at the Stanford Research Institute on a mobile robot that can reason about its own actions. With a few years, Shakey the Robot can navigate a world of blocks in eight rooms and follow instructions in simplified English.



**1982**

John Hopfield demonstrates that networks of simple neurons can calculate.

**1979**

World champion backgammon player Luigi Villa becomes the first human champion of a board game to be defeated by a computer program, Hans Berliner's BKG 9.8.

**1984**

The Cyc project is launched by Douglas Lenat. Cyc is an attempt to assemble a comprehensive database of common-sense knowledge, allowing A.I. applications that use the database to reason like humans do.

**1999**

Sony releases the premier version of Aibo, a robotic companion dog intended for the consumer market. Within 20 minutes of going on sale, it sells out.



**1997**

Deeper Blue, a highly parallel 32-node IBM RS/6000 SP supercomputer, defeats Gary Kasparov, temperamental world chess champion.

**1985**

Speech recognition technologies are introduced.



**1994**

The eight-legged Dante II descends into the volcanic crater of Mount Spurr to collect samples. The robot is severely damaged in a fall, but the mission is widely considered a success.

**2000**

Honda introduces Asimo, a self-contained humanoid robot that can walk, run, climb stairs, and recognize faces, speech and gestures, all unaided.



**2001**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration clears the CyberKnife to treat tumors anywhere in the body. The robotic system uses imaging technology to locate tumors, then automatically delivers precision-targeted doses of radiation.

**2005**

Researchers at Cornell University build the first self-replicating robot. Each robot is made up of a chain of prefabricated cubes. Given a supply of more cubes, the snake-like robots assemble copies of themselves.



# BETTER THAN HUMAN

**ECONOMICAL.** When a \$20,000 robot can work 24-7 without breaks, complaints, sick time or health insurance, it simply costs less than any minimum-wage human.

**DURABLE.** Robots can be ideal workers for dangerous and hostile environments like oil platforms, nuclear power plants and chemical factories.

**CLEAN.** From food preparation to hospital work, robot hands can be sterilized.

**PRODUCTIVE.** Robots don't need much down-time thanks to Toshiba's new Supercharge batteries, which charge in just one minute.

**TRUSTWORTHY.** Whether delivering your mail or guarding a bank, robots can't be bribed and have no ulterior motives.

**VALIANT.** Robots will be better than humans at rescuing people from avalanches, earthquakes and other disasters.

**FEARLESS.** The Pentagon is intensely interested in the idea of superpowered troops that can kill without emotion, eliminating casualties – on their side.

**AUSTERE.** Robots don't eat, drink or breathe. Most of the cost of sending humans into space is related to life support; sending robots would cost a fraction.

**PRECISE.** Robots can make extremely fine, steady movements, and if they have hands with human proportions, they can be programmed to use any hand tool, even surgical instruments

**HELPFUL.** In Japan, where social rules often prevent people from asking for directions from strangers, Fujitsu's Enon can guide people to destinations using its 10,000-word vocabulary.

**NURTURING.** In the US, migrant workers are frequently brought in to harvest crops, because most Americans refuse to toil outdoors all day for little pay. Labor-intensive food production may depend largely on robot workers.



# BUT NOT HUMAN

**ROBOMOMMY.** What happens to children psychologically when they are raised by a robot nanny? Already many spend more time in the electronic world than with their parents. Will they feel more comfortable with machines than humans?

**ROBOCRIME.** What happens when a robot is used to commit a murder or robbery? Can a robot be arrested?

Should we start thinking about robot crimes and laws now, before they become a reality?

**ROBOVIRUSES.** What happens if a hacker hijacks your robot and gives it a "house wrecker" or "arsonist" virus?

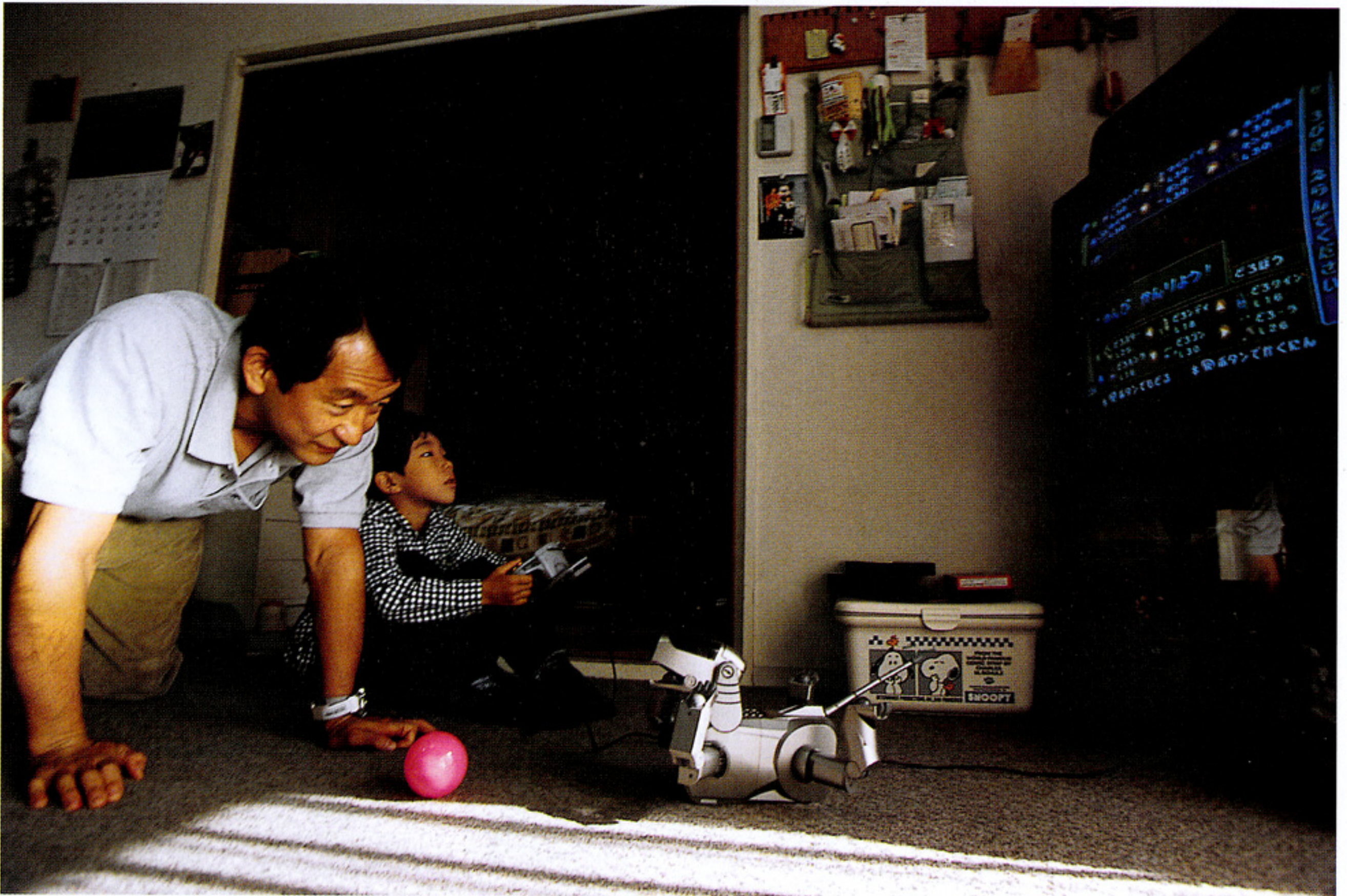
**ROBOZOMBIES.** Can't be there in person? Why not rent an android body with a face that can morph to look just

like you. Back at home, you don a motion-capture suit and goggles that allow you to see and hear from your surrogate's perspective.

*Ken MacAllister assists in educational technologies research at Simon Fraser University. His musings on the future of A.I. and robotics provided Adbusters with the impetus for this special technology feature.*



Before they can be integrated into human societies, robots will have to be taught culture-specific manners and customs, an active area in A.I. research. AIBO [pictured below] has long been equipped with programming to make sure he goes slack if he detects that his joints are pinching any little fingers.



Although robots may never actually experience emotions the way humans do, they will have to be capable of reading our emotions and adjusting their behavior accordingly. A drawn mouth and a flattened tone of voice could soon cue your robot to ask if you need any assistance around the house.





MARIKO MORI

One of a series of images depicting artist Mariko Mori's futuristic take on the traditional Japanese tea ceremony. Mori's fantasy images tend to suggest an optimistic fascination with robots and artificial beings, an attitude that is generally reflected in Japanese society as a whole – one of the reasons why Japan has been so aggressive in pursuing robotics research.



---

## CLONED CULTURE

---

DOLLY IS DEAD. BUT THE QUIET DEMISE, SICK AND early, of the world's most famous sheep has not stopped art from illuminating the scientific journey she embodied, a journey which will surely end with a cloned human.

What has changed is that our collective contemplation of the increasing industrialization of life is no longer confined to B-movie plots, but has become the dominant metaphor in works by serious artists and thinkers. As the prospect of an engineered human becomes more likely, there has been a change in perspective among cultural commentators from simply viewing cloning as a cheap pop culture plot device that entertains the masses, to regarding it as a tangible future event

whose ethical and emotional ramifications deserve serious analysis and a public introduction, not least from the clone's point of view.

Instead of cloning the science fiction genre wholesale, such artists focus on the human heart, that most vital of vital organs. Using the profound emotions of love and grief, this new

consciousness of cloning addresses our mechanized culture in which individuality itself seems lost.

And by focusing in on the clones' humanity they are really exploring how science and mass culture have deadened and homogenized the rest of us.

Unflinching English playwright Caryl Churchill's *A Number* depicts a series of confrontations between a man, Salter, his son, Michael, and two cloned versions of his son. Like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, it is the all-too-human protagonist, the father, who is the monstrosity.

It seems at first that Salter had his dead son cloned, but Churchill has tinkered with the cloning genre's "bad seed" convention and it turns out that the father sent the boy away and had him replaced so he could start afresh after doing a lousy job of raising

him. By recasting the clone as the good seed she highlights contemporary culture's need for perfection: the father literally discarding his child for an unblemished version.

Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* is narrated by Kathy, who recalls her clone-hood at an exclusive English boarding school where extensive medical checks, student myths of dismembered bodies in the woods, and a feeling that everything they own is secondhand all lead to a realization and meek acceptance that they have been created so that their organs can be harvested for "real" people. The clones' mundane dreams – of working in an office or planning a future together – are lost in a steady

erosion of hope and a blank incomprehension about the workings of the society that created them. They live in a prolonged limbo, whose endgame is dissembled in Orwellian tones that speak of "donating" rather than losing organs, and "completing" rather than dying. Ishiguro's story ends the way it was always going to end – with a haunting

resignation that recalls the bleak sort of acceptance Holocaust victims were said to have exhibited as they stood patiently waiting in line to be gassed.

Infused with a sense of loss, these works are not about the B-movie clichés of sinister twins and deranged clone armies, but rather about the fragile fate of every individual under the collective weight of a cloned culture. As writer M. John Harrison puts it, "About why we don't explode, why we don't just wake up one day and go sobbing and crying down the street, kicking everything to pieces out of the raw, infuriating, completely personal sense of our lives never having been what they could have been."

And in that sense, is it really possible for any of us to tell apart the sheep from the sheep with souls?

Maria Hampton

About why we don't just wake  
up one day and go sobbing  
and crying down the street,  
kicking everything to pieces  
out of the raw, infuriating,  
completely personal sense of  
our lives never having been  
what they could have been.



## TECHNO BREAKTHROUGH

### COMPUTERS MAY HAVE ACHIEVED SOMETHING AKIN TO CONSCIOUSNESS

*says John Horgan*



IN THE MID-1960S, MARVIN Minsky, a founding father of the field of artificial intelligence, predicted that computers would be as smart as humans in less than a decade. Since then, computers have become exponentially more powerful and clever; they can now translate

languages, recognize voices, judge loan applications, interpret cardiograms, play championship chess, help us navigate our cars. But while computers excel at performing tasks that can be precisely defined, they still lack the flexible, all-purpose intelligence – the ordinary common sense – that every normal human acquires in childhood.

Some artificial-intelligence researchers now doubt that computers will ever display the complex, humanoid intelligence of HAL, the silicon star of Stanley Kubrick's film 2001. In the essay collection *HAL's Legacy*, the computer scientist Roger Shank declares that HAL "is an unrealistic conception of an intelligent machine" and "could never exist." Computer scientists can only create machines that "know a great deal about what they are supposed to know about and miserably little about anything else." Minsky rejects that pessimism, pointing out that computers have failed to acquire common sense because scientists have failed to give it to them. "There's been only one large project to do something about that," Minsky remarked recently, "that's the famous Cyc project."

The gigantic software program called Cyc is the brainchild of Douglas Lenat. Since 1984, he and a small team of co-workers have painstakingly embedded millions of common-sense rules, or assertions, into Cyc. As a result, Lenat says, Cyc "knows that trees are usually outdoors, that once people die they stay dead, and that a glass filled with milk will be rightside-up, not upside-down." These are the sorts of assumptions that supposedly smart

computers often fail to make. Lenat calls Cyc "the world's first true artificial intelligence, having both common sense and the ability to reason with it." He believes Cyc has already achieved something akin to consciousness. "If you ask it what it is, it knows that it is a computer," he says. "If you ask who we are, it knows that we are users."

In 1994 Lenat founded Cycorp in Austin, Texas, to market commercial applications for Cyc. In an effort to tap into funds flowing from the Department of Homeland Security, Lenat has trained Cyc to be an expert in identifying security loopholes in communication networks. But Cyc's most impressive talent is gleaning the contextual rather than just literal meaning of language. As a result, Cyc can supplement speech-recognition and language-translation programs; it can also boost the power of search engines by responding to the spirit and not just the letter of requests for information.

Lenat hopes that Cyc will eventually become more or less autonomous, capable of acquiring new knowledge by prowling the web and absorbing information on its own. After that phase transition, Lenat predicts, Cyc will begin evolving in ways that may be difficult to predict. Cyc will become a "full-fledged creative member of a group that comes up with new discoveries," Lenat says. "Surprising discoveries. Ways out of boxes." Lenat has given versions of Cyc to other computer scientists, who are free to tinker with it as they choose – creating, in effect, children of the original Cyc, which will no doubt develop in their own idiosyncratic ways. Perhaps Cyc and its offspring will help us solve the neural code or other problems – that is, if they do not turn on us, like the psychopathic killer HAL.

*John Horgan, former senior writer at Scientific American, is author of, most recently, Rational Mysticism: Spirituality Meets Science in the Search for Enlightenment.*






---

## CREATIVE SPARKS

---

ONE OF THE EARLIEST KNOWN PHILOSOPHICAL inquiries into the nature of creativity was Plato's *Theory of Ideas*, which ascribes all creativity to the supernatural. Only the gods had the power to create, and new ideas were planted in the minds of people by divine forces – a fire that burned within every human that we could tap to solve problems. While the idea of the supernatural origins of creativity doesn't enjoy a great deal of currency these days, what has remained is the notion that – save for few paint-happy chimps and elephants – creativity is fundamentally human. The course of every civilization can be described as a succession of innovations driven by human creativity. Our capacity for continuous improvement through creative exploration and expression is one of the hallmarks of the species.

What happens, then, if we are abruptly relieved

---

Dave Striver loved the university – at least most of the time. Every now and then, without warning, a wave of . . . well, it was true: a wave of hatred rose up and flowed like molten blood through every cell in his body. . . . But most of the time Striver loved the ivy-covered clocktowers, the ancient and sturdy brick, and the sun-splashed verdant greens and eager youth who learned alongside him.

– Opening passage from “Self-Betrayal”  
by Brutus.1, a computer program

of our fundamentally human duty to create?

In the late 1990s, Hans Moravec, Ray Kurzweil, Neil Gershenfeld and Kevin Warwick all published popular books predicting that artificial intelligence would soon overtake human intelligence in every way, including creativity. If they are right, then we will, in the not-to-distant future, see machines creating works of art, new scientific theories, inventing new devices, even designing their own successors – and doing it all at blinding speed. They could write entire novels and compose hours of music in seconds. They could also write original essays for students, generate elaborate lies, mastermind criminal activities and design more devastating weaponry. In other words, it's safe to wager that creative machines would profoundly change human society.

Ever since we put the first industrial robots to

work in 1961, we've grown increasingly accustomed to the idea of machines doing our work for us – building cars, defusing bombs and vacuuming our floors. And while they are already much faster and more accurate than humans at many tasks, it is still widely held that computers will never reach human levels of creativity. For years, folk wisdom has held





that pulpier romance novels are already written by computers. While it may just be a veiled comment regarding the formulaic nature of the genre, it does force us to think seriously about how we define creativity. Is it creative to write a by-the-numbers romance or sci-fi novel, which may be clichéd but will nonetheless be enjoyed by many? Is it creative merely to create something startlingly unique, but useless? Is it creative to use an old solution to address a new problem? Depending on how we answer, artificial intelligence may already be catching up to us.

It may seem that the cold, calculated logic that computers excel at could never be used toward creative ends, but working examples do exist. Cognitive scientist Selmer Bringsjord was interested in uniting logic and creativity through the five-year development of a program called Brutus.1. The program specializes in stories of betrayal and

self-deception, and can generate readable works of short fiction based on algorithms describing the ins and outs of lies and double-crosses. Brutus.1 randomly generates characters and settings, then outlines the plot and conflict based on common-sense rules and the conventions of the genre. Finally, the program refers to its grammatical rules and spits out somewhat turgid yet convincingly human prose.

Even Bringsjord admits that, at best, Brutus.1 exhibits “weak” creativity, because it cannot break out and generate entirely new genres. Despite this, there is value in demonstrating that creativity can be simulated in a meaningful way using only logic and rules. But creative A.I. is also capable of working according to entirely different paradigms. Concept-based systems like Douglas Lenat’s common-sense system Cyc may be used to generate “what if” scenarios by reassigning known concepts to new categories. For example, if a system has a concept of a cat, and of what cats can and cannot do, then the cat concept can be reassigned to a different category, like “vehicle.” Could a cat be a vehicle? If not, why not? Could cats be vehicles in any sense? Might cats be vehicles for small things?

In A.I., concepts have been used to create case-based reasoning engines that can generate novel explanations for events in fictional stories. David Leake at Indiana University heads up the SWALE project, which uses an Internet search engine to locate the data required to construct cases that may explain events. When presented with a story about the unexpected death of a champion racehorse also named Swale, SWALE generated these explanations:

REMINDING: Thinking of other deaths of those in peak physical condition causes the system to be reminded of the death of runner Jim Fixx, who died when his running over-taxed a hereditary heart defect.

EXPLANATION: Swale might have had a heart defect that caused his racing to prompt a heart attack.

REMINDING: Thinking about other deaths of young stars, the system is reminded of Janis Joplin’s death from a drug overdose.

EXPLANATION: The pressure of being a superstar was too much for Swale, and he turned to drugs to escape. He died of an overdose.

While SWALE’s explanations may not be totally plausible, these creative hypotheses show that it is possible to simulate conjecture.



What Brutus.I and SWALE demonstrate in their own modest ways is that, far from being impossible, creative computing is here and evolving rapidly – from Improviser, a program that can generate new solutions to mechanical problems, to ISAAC, which can simulate the thought processes involved when reading a story, to SINS, a system that can produce abstract representations of sensorimotor experiences. Currently, these efforts are restricted to very specific domains, but by drawing upon more general databases like Cyc, similar systems may soon be able to engage in a broader range of activities.

Beyond the challenges specific to recreating the higher levels of abstract reasoning that humans are capable of – things like generating novel and usable analogies – the biggest hurdle facing A.I. researchers

is teaching computers to identify problems in the first place. Computers don't yet experience motivating emotions, and it is doubtful that they will ever experience human emotions as we know them, based as those emotions are on human physiology and biochemistry. While this might appear to represent a dead-end for artificial intelligence, it is worth remembering that computers engage in many tasks that require an emotional cue or motivation in humans. A person would have to be very motivated to search a medical database of two million heart patients looking for those who took aspirin on a daily basis, but a computer can accomplish this in seconds without any motivation at all.

The need for motivation may, in fact, be a human factor that is irrelevant to A.I. With that in mind, we should ask what motivates humanity's desire to devise creative machines at all. Despite the current pace of innovation – faster than at any point in history – our need for creative solutions has never been greater. We face tremendous challenges in a world with global trade, explosive growth, dwindling resources and a changing climate. The survival of our species may depend on the ability to address the unforeseen problems our many innovations have spawned. Creative machines could help find solutions to problems that have dogged us for centuries. They could also create whole new problems. When that happens, then the real question becomes: do we have the creativity to deal with them?

Ken MacAllister



"Surprise, I'm grounded. I fucking hate my mom. That old bitch never misses anything. I told her I was going to Gregg's last night, but something clued her in that I was lying. Probably watching my pupil size while I was talking.

"Anyway, she turns up at the party and hauls my ass home. She actually physically *picks me up by my waist*. In front of everyone. Turns out she linked up with Galileo as soon as I left and was monitoring my position the whole time. She even projected one of those stupid P.O.V. videos of me lying to her, over and over like thirty times. Trying to make me feel guilty, I guess.

"Clanky old fuckin' bitch. I hate being an orphan."



---

## THREE EASY PIECES

---

As manmade as masturbation, the sweet scent of medicated sex is on its way to offering us push-button peak performance, assured gratification and automated, mechanized, dependable arousal. Soon, we will eliminate the messiness and the blood and the gore of reproduction, the preciousness of intimacy, and the vaguaries of love. And as robots become ever more human, we rush to meet them halfway.

**I** With a ripple of touch-typing you will soon be able to robotically stroke, touch, squeeze and caress your loved-one across the once numb void of cyberspace.

In November, the *Singapore Straits Times* reported that 24-year-old James Teh had invented the world's first cyber hug suit – inexplicably for a chicken – with plans to extend its use to household pets and children cheated out of regular physical contact from busy parents. Using Teh's apparatus, a fowl wearing a wireless, sensor-rigged jacket is tracked by video camera and the resulting information is transmitted via the Internet as a 3-D model, which moves exactly like its live counterpart. When the owner touches this model, the sensation is mechanically reproduced as a series of vibrations by the bird's jacket.

Teh, a Nanyang Technological University researcher, hopes to expand his work to produce pajama suits for children that would simulate not just the pressure but the warmth of a mother's hug. His supervisor Adrian Cheok thinks it could have significant applications for future families: "These days, parents go on a lot of business trips; but with children, hugging and touching are very important parts of communication."

**2** Too pissed, stressed, tired or bored to get laid? You must be sexually dysfunctional. Well rest easy, breathe deep and take your medicine: PT-141, the world's first inhaled aphrodisiac, is in phase III of clinical trials.

While developing a sunless tanning agent known as Melanotan II, scientists at Montreal's Concordia University switched their attention to the one of the product's metabolites after noting that human tan testers developed not just a healthy glow but spontaneous erections and arousal.

Similarly startling and not-so-subtle results were reported in rats, with females displaying increased

"solicitation" behavior and, in some instances, mounting the males. In later human trials, Patient 41 said: "On a five-point scale, I'd rate the erection I had as a six."

Unlike vascular drugs like Viagra, which focus solely on the mechanics of sex, PT-141 is being hailed as a true aphrodisiac since it acts on the arousal centre of the brain, the hypothalamus, to artificially stimulate desire. Noting that such a pathway offered a potential treatment for the estimated 40 percent of women afflicted by female sexual dysfunction as well as the 150 million men worldwide reporting erectile dysfunction, Concordia University professor Jim Pfaus told the BBC: "It could be bigger than Viagra. . . . There's nothing in the arsenal now to treat female sexual dysfunction. That's one of the things that's really promising about this drug. If you have a woman in a loving relationship, but who just doesn't feel desire for sex, the question is why. What goes on to inhibit that?"

Dr. Annette Shadiack, biological research director for Palatin, the New Jersey drug company developing





the spray, said PT-141 had the potential to “meet an unmet need” and, by resetting chain of command interactions between the brain and body, could “return a woman to her natural function.”

**3** Forty-five years after science stopped viewing women as moon-influenced menstrual oceans and turned them into battery hens, a new Pill is about to be swallowed in Canada and the US that promises the end of menstruation. Period.

As well as providing relief for women whose dysfunctional hormonal cycles literally cripple their lives, Anya, the 365-day contraceptive touted as the first true menstrual suppressant, is already being couched in feminist notions of control and freedom by gynecologists who extol its virtues for athletes and the career-driven, parents worried about daughters missing school, women who want to wear skirts without underwear and those who are too busy to change a tampon.

Others believe Anya is a long-overdue correction to a mistake introduced by the original Pill's co-inventor John Rock, when he allowed the dictates of science and religion to cross. While the devout Catholic's wonder drug snuffed out the complex alchemy of synchronicity, pheromones, melatonin and moonlight behind each woman's hormonal cycle, it factored in an artificial bleed. As well as appealing to the father-of-five, grandfather-of-19's paternalistic belief that women would find the manmade monthly pain and inconvenience reassuring, this fake red flag was designed to appease the Catholic church in the hope that it would deem Rock's invention a natural form of contraception. The Vatican ultimately denounced the Pill in 1968 and Rock eventually lost the faith whose whims he had allowed to shape his patients' health, but the mechanization of femininity had begun.

Rendered fat, depressed and thrombotic by a feminist drug that WHO recently classified as carcinogenic (because it increases cervical, breast and liver cancer rates while, ironically, lowering libido), women are now being told that they are victims of the Pill's success. According to University of Washington gynecologist Dr. Leslie Miller, the repeated pregnancies, long bouts of breast feeding, lower body weights and shorter life-spans women faced throughout history meant that a mere 200 years ago European women had, for better or worse,

just 50 periods in their lives. The Dogon tribe in Mali, who typically start menstruating later, give birth eight or nine times and reach menopause sooner, still have just 110 cycles. But for Western women that figure can be as high as 450, something Miller argues we never evolved to cope with. This mechanized and fruitless monthly turnover of breast, endometrial and ovarian tissue has been tentatively linked to soaring rates of these “modern” cancers.

“It's a modern problem to have 13 periods a year for 35 years,” said Miller, who for years has been suppressing her own cycle by omitting the original Pill's monthly placebos, “I think the continuous pill is a modern solution to a modern problem.”

Other experts couldn't disagree more, arguing that while the health effects of the original Pill are still being determined, the more drastic course that Anya charts should be halted. “From a cultural perspective I think it's misogynistic,” said Edmonton-based reproductive healthcare practitioner Geraldine Matus. “Women's bodies are a marvelous thing to commodify. We have all sorts of processes that can be turned into diseases – pregnancy, nursing, menstruation and menopause – all of these things. And because we tend to use the healthcare system more than men we're a great marketshare.”

Citing the period's role in purging iron, pathogens and sperm-borne toxins as well as the hormonal cycle's ability to lower women's blood pressure two weeks out of every four, Dr. Susan Rako, a Boston-based psychiatrist and women's reproductive health expert denounced menstrual suppression as the “largest uncontrolled experiment in medical history, hands down,” adding “It's very terribly sad, the idea that teenage girls would grow up in a world where the idea of menstruating is considered undesirable and a nuisance. It's our last connection to nature and in fact, there's a certain kind of rhythm that goes with your monthly cycle; where sometimes in the month you feel more energetic, sometimes more creative, sometimes more sexual, sometimes more vulnerable. That's all part of being female.”

Regardless of the ethical debate, barring any last-minute hitches, Anya is on her way to becoming another bittersweet pill to be swallowed in the name of reproductive control – the same mechanization of fertility that wedges hormone rings, wire coils and plastic caps in the birth canal, packs pellets under the skin, and aborts another small trace of what it once meant to be human.

*Maria Hampton*



# CONVERGENCE

VIRTUAL SEX

Replicated, regulated menstruation is stopped entirely by a new oral contraceptive ANYA

BRAIN CHIPS are implanted to treat depression, epilepsy and Parkinson's

It will happen gradually, in increments less often perceptible than not. As robots become more and more human, and as we become more and more manufactured, intimate emotional connections with our synthetic counterparts will take on a naturalness that we won't completely anticipate. And because we can't help ourselves from making androids according to our collective ideas about perfection, they will be desirable. Probably even more desirable than we are to each other.

So, one day, within most of our lifetimes, the moment of truth will come. But it won't be when somebody professes, with a completely straight face and with sincerity on the lips, to have

# HUMANS

SPERM BANKS

People link to their light, heat and home electronics systems via HOUSEKEEPER IMPLANTS

A UK husband and wife share NERVOUS SYSTEM CHIPS – to experience each others pain and emotions via a computer

ARTIFICIAL WOMBS, ECTOGENESIS



**SPEECH COMPREHENSION & SYNTHESIS**  
technology lets robots communicate  
naturalistically with humans

**BIPEDAL  
LOCOMOTION**

**Logic algorithms and  
common-sense databases  
lead to unaided CREATIVITY  
& PROBLEM SOLVING**

The real moment, the one that will bring joyful tears to our eyes as it brutally kicks our stomachs out, will be when somewhere, someone will profess, with a completely straight face and with sincerity on the lips, to have fallen madly in love with a robot – whether that robot is a lover, a friend, a child, a parent – and that robot will, in turn, with all its ersatz heart in whatever way it is capable, profess to love that person back.

**Logic algorithms and  
common-sense databases  
lead to unaided CREATIVITY  
& PROBLEM SOLVING**

# ROBOTS

The diagram consists of four interconnected shapes, each representing a different area of robot research. The shapes are connected by a network of dotted lines. A red dotted line forms a path that connects the 'SELF-REPLICATION' area to the 'LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE' area, and then to the 'FACIAL RECOGNITION' area. The other three areas are connected by a blue dotted line.

- SELF-REPLICATION**  
Assembling pre-fabricated components for SELF-REPLICATION
- LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE**  
Basing memory architecture on biological networks allows computers to LEARN THROUGH EXPERIENCE
- FACIAL RECOGNITION**
- BIO-INSPIRED POWER**  
By EATING & DIGESTING organic matter – slugs, flies, even garbage – robots can run without an external power source

## Basing memory architecture on biological networks allows computers to LEARN THROUGH EXPERIENCE

**By EATING & DIGESTING organic matter – slugs, flies, even garbage – robots can run without an external power source**





"This one's the best yet. I've had her for nearly a year. She just blows my mind. The things she's capable of, man, it makes your toes curl. A real firecracker. Pretty easy to program too. I just use my Blackberry.

"If I had one complaint, it would be having to wait for her to recharge. It only takes ten, fifteen minutes, but it seems like it's always the worst timing. Maybe I should get two – tag team! Battery life's pretty good though.

"I had a conventional girlfriend for a while. She was a good cook, just really clingy. Bit of a dead fish in the sack. Nice ass, but couldn't suck her way out of a paper bag."



I long for the day when poets  
will be replaced by machines;  
assembly line sentences  
sputtered out and sold,  
painless and paper-free-poems  
completely separate from me.  
For skies are smudged, the clouds look bleak,  
and all my pens will only leak  
puddled thoughts beneath the ink,  
come, we don't have time to think,  
each word is just another link  
fastened to their metal feet.

I await the day that I am outdated  
by automated poetic technique;  
once feelings fade and fingers creak,  
and soon I will be obsolete,  
just look at what fills the streets,  
when crowds disperse it's still concrete.  
No matter how vague this seems  
it's kept alive by gasoline,  
we once survived on mustard greens  
in simpler times than we have seen,  
but these memories are bittersweet  
and eternity seems incomplete,  
to win is to admit defeat.

I long for the day that they sell  
bottles of new poem smell  
to mask my moldy metaphors  
and wash my wasted words –  
all the awkward thoughts you've never heard.  
I want my love poems finely misted,  
syllables scented sensually  
with chemicals that smell like the sea  
and move as smooth as Vaseline  
until there's nothing real left in me  
except that which comes out beautifully.

Perfection can only be found  
pounded into pavement.  
Forget the ground we've saved,  
process it and praise it.  
Words only survive on sidewalks  
and raised beside city blocks,  
not this talk that spits forth in tangents,  
when even rock has chipped away  
we'll still have the fragments,  
so shed your tears and then repent,  
soon all poems will be about cement.

*Colin Borchert*





BEGINNING OF THE ENDGAME





FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM/RALPH LAUER

On September 22, 2005, with Hurricane Rita bearing down, the residents of Houston couldn't get out of town fast enough. Is this what the planetary endgame looks like? Millions in a bottleneck trying to flee from a catastrophe.



## END GAMES

---

IN ONE GENERATION WE HAVE CONTAMINATED almost every living system on the planet. We make perfume from petroleum and preserve food in plastic. Our pans don't stick; we clean without scrubbing, and spill coffee without worry of stain.

Yet these modern wonders come at a price. We are the living embodiment of our ingenuity; each carrying a trace of the molecules that make it all possible. This chemical burden is in our parents, in us and, in the highest levels of all, in our children. A legacy of heavy metals, pesticides, solvents and coatings has steeped across the placenta like original sin and women drain a lifetime's accumulation of pollutants into their infants while they nurse. But no one knows what it means yet.

What we do know is that our chemical dependency is accelerating. Of the 80,000 chemicals employed in the US, just 15,000 have been extensively tested, and each month the Environmental Protection

Agency receives 100 applications from companies with a new compound to sell. More than 700 are detectable in our bodies, and blood concentrations of certain fire retardants now double every 18 months, instead of the five years it took in the 1990s, with Americans carrying a ten to 100 times greater chemical burden than Swedes.

Scary is an understatement. But what's truly terrifying is that no one sought consent, we have no way of removing these unnamable, unknowable traces and no return address if we could. So it's unsurprising that people cling to reassurances that five, 10, even 20 parts per billion is safe. But soon, when enough people get scared, the time will come when a big corporation's safety claims just won't stick anymore – like the Teflon pans – and a new human rights movement is born. Because we have a right not to have this done to our bodies at all.

---

According to a US government report, that country's global warming gas emissions nearly doubled in 14 years to reach an all-time record high in 2004.

The Energy Department document shows a two percent rise in that year alone to 7,122 million tons of carbon dioxide a year – a quarter of the global total. The increase was the highest in the past five years and part of an acceleration. Last year's figures are expected to be similar or higher.

Elsewhere, a study by the UK's Institute for Public Policy Research found that ten of 15 EU countries committed to Kyoto would fall short of their targets unless they take urgent action. Just Sweden and the UK are remotely on course, according to the think tank.

## McMANSIONS

As family sizes continue to fall, floor plans have increased by 39 percent since 1970 to 2,400 square feet, twice the size of a baby-boomer's 1950s childhood home. And the biggest houses of all – dubbed McMansions or New American Castles – are getting bigger still.

But the must-have craft rooms, supersized kitchens, theaters, solaria, cellars, mudrooms and Hummer-sized garages mean a 10,000 square-foot megahome requires six times the materials of an average house and proportionally more energy.

The result? 5.4 million pounds of extra carbon dioxide from 1.2 million pounds of coal and 24 million cubic feet of natural gas will be belched out into the atmosphere over the life of one monster house.



## SAVING OUR SEEDS

The Norwegian government is finalizing plans to build a "doomsday vault" housing a seed bank of all known varieties of the world's crops inside an Arctic island mountain.

Work to hollow out a cave in a sandstone summit on the ice-bound island of Spitsbergen – approximately 966 km – from the North Pole, will start early next year.

Permafrost will keep the vault below freezing point and the seeds will be protected by meter-thick walls of reinforced concrete, two airlocks and high security blast-proof doors designed to withstand global catastrophes like nuclear war, climate change or natural disasters that could wipe out the planet's sources of food.

Curator Geoff Hawtin of the Global Crop Diversity Trust told the BBC that there were approximately 1,400 seed banks around the world, but many were located in countries that were either politically unstable or faced threats from the natural environment.

"What we're trying to do is build a back-up to these," he said.

## THE LOCAL SOLUTION

LOCAL RATHER THAN ORGANIC FOOD COULD PROVIDE THE BIGGEST boost to sustainable living, American, Japanese and UK scientists have discovered.

Iowan researchers calculated that purchasing just 10 percent more food from within the state's boundaries would reduce collective annual carbon dioxide emissions by 3.6 million kilos.

Japan's environmental organization Daichi-o-Mamoru Kai, meanwhile, found switching to local food – and in particular eschewing US soy for homegrown – would be equivalent to reducing household energy use by 20 percent, easily enabling Japan to honor its five percent carbon dioxide emission cut under the Kyoto Agreement.

In the UK, researchers calculate that purchasing food grown within a 12-mile radius has a greater positive impact than buying organic food that is not local, substantially lowering the environmental price tag from \$2.3 billion per year in degradation and clean-up costs to under \$230 million.

While some international trade is inevitable – catering to cold-climate chocolate and coffee cultures – most is duplicative and ecologically counter-intuitive: Heinz ketchup eaten in California is made with California-grown tomatoes that are shipped to Canada for processing and returned in bottles. In one year, the port of New York City exported \$431,000 of California almonds to Italy, and imported \$397,000 of Italian almonds to the US.



Instead of dwelling of the big picture, let's pull it down to a manageable scale. Let's bring it home, right down into our communities. If each family and community addresses the situation with available solutions – by reducing their energy consumption, carpooling, recycling and voting for informed politicians – together, we can solve this problem.

— Robert Redford on climate change, quoted in *Mother Earth News*, Dec/Jan 2006



---

## IS OUR FATE TIED TO CHINA'S GROWTH?

---

WATER IN FIVE OF CHINA'S LARGEST RIVERS IS NOW so polluted it's dangerous to touch, acid rain bathes 30 percent of land, half its forests have gone, and two-thirds of major cities fail air quality standards – with officials admitting that in some areas breathing is like smoking two packs of cigarettes a day.

But the picture wasn't always this bleak. In *The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight*, Thom Hartmann recalls his Beijing guide assuring him, 20 years ago, that officials were acutely aware of the precariousness of sustaining a quarter of the world's population on just seven percent of its farmland.

"'We have a destiny,' he said, standing straighter . . . 'China will not follow the mistake of the West. We have learned from our past. If the winter is coming and you have stored enough food to make it through . . . would you allow your children to eat it all in the first month? China will not make this mistake with oil.'"

A repressive political situation enables China to turn on a dime. In nations where drivers regard rising gas prices as an affront to their masculinity, it's hard to imagine the nimbleness afforded by a government that can dictate how many children a man can father.

But the results are profound and global: a pioneering green GDP, 4.8 million forest hectares replanted since 2004, a 58 percent increase in solar cells since 2003 and an interest in renewables that has cut global wind turbine prices by 20 percent.

But it's a double-edged sword. Hydroelectric power created by the Three Gorges dam promises to generate the equivalent of 90 million annual barrels of oil. Too bad it will flood fertile agricultural lands, eliminate wildlife habitat of endangered species like the panda, and risk turning the Yangtze River into an open sewer the length of Lake Superior.

It's hard to imagine how to avoid this ecological destruction. Simple mathematics dictats that it was only a matter of time before China's 1.3 billion residents overtook 296 million Americans as the most voracious consumers of four of the five basic commodities – grain, meat, coal and steel. And they

are quickly catching up on oil. From 1990 to 2002 the number of cars quadrupled and could double seven more times by 2020. As the world's most populous nation begins importing food, financiers speculate on grain as shortages threaten shockwaves across world markets and turn farmers into sheikhs.

Washington's Earth Policy Institute predicts that by 2031 – when incomes match Americans – China's tipping point is likely to become the world's. Analyst Lester Brown believes that, unchecked, China will consume two-thirds of the world's current grain supplies, 99 million daily barrels of oil – against a global supply of 84 million – and twice as much paper as the world currently makes. If they follow Americans and amass three cars for every four people, their fleet of 1.1 billion vehicles will dwarf

the current global fleet of 800 million, and would require paving an area equivalent to all of China's rice paddies to be driven.

But despite a climate notoriously repressive of non-government interference, over 2000 green NGOs have taken root, newspaper environmental coverage has risen five-fold since 1994, and protests have increased every year for a decade, to 74,000 in 2004. Last

April, 60,000 Zhejiang residents torched cars, smashed windows and injured 30 officials during pollution protests. In July, 15,000 rioters raged against an aging Xinchang pharmaceutical plant.

Ironically, the democratic spark that such protests may ignite – like in post-Chernobyl Eastern Europe – would end China's ability to turn on a dime, hastening the tipping point.

Which leaves us in the morally odious position of wishing a continued dictatorship on others to ensure our own survival. But how can we demonize a nation whose individual citizens consume ten times less than we do? If the path that China is taking the world makes us nervous, we might want to level the criticism closer to home – at the institutions that gave China the directions.

Maria Hampton





## THE ECO WARS HAVE STARTED *says Terry Glavin*



IN THE DYING LIGHT OF A COOL spring afternoon, at a shallow bend of the broad and sweeping Amur River, in the Russian Far East, a man pulled at the oars of a fishing boat and hauled up at a sandy beach just below Sikachi Alyan, an old village of the Nanai tribe.

On this day, 53-year-old Misha came back empty-handed, but when he was a boy, the 4,400-kilometer Amur was teeming with fish. There were giant taimen, and kaluga sturgeon – the largest freshwater fish in world. There were salmon and skygazers, pikes and grass carps, river-horses, ciscos and catfish.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Russia was plundered. Salmon bound for Russia's Pacific rivers were scooped up by Japanese and Korean fishing boats. Poaching became a multi-million-dollar criminal business. By the late 1990s, almost half of Russia's economy was controlled by gangsters. Life expectancy among Russian males fell by seven years, to 57, roughly the same as in Sudan. The Amur was looted of its fish.

It was anarchy, and it was how Misha found his life entwined with two billion other people around the world – the third of humanity now living in the new world disorder that the Washington, D.C.-based Fund for Peace describes in its "Failed State Index."

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, by conventional measurements, peace was breaking out all over. Iraq and Afghanistan are anomalies – since the end of the Cold War, wars have declined by 40 percent. They have become far fewer in number, and less deadly. War isn't the problem. It's the peace that will kill you: nine out of ten armed conflicts underway around the world are not between nation states. They are battles within states over food, water, arable land, and mineral wealth, especially oil.

By the fall of 2005, the Institute for Environmental and Human Security reckoned that there were already 20 million "environmental refugees" in the world – far more than war refugees or people fleeing state repression. Today's refugees are fleeing ecological collapse, desertification, deforestation, drought and crop failure. They're running from lawlessness, warlordism, and organized crime. Within five years, the Institute predicts, there will be 50 million such refugees.

Among those countries now well beyond the realm of effective sovereignty and the rule of law are Haiti, the Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Yemen, Somalia and Afghanistan. But less known is the fact that failed-state conditions are taking hold in some of the world's most populous nation-states: China, Malaysia, Mexico, Brazil, Russia and the Philippines. The main factors are "demographic," which is to say overpopulation, environmental collapse, dispossession, and conflict over dwindling resources.

In little-known places like Irian Jaya – where 100,000 indigenous Papuans have been slaughtered in recent years – the Indonesian military has stepped up efforts to expedite clearcutting in one of Asia's largest remaining tracts of virgin tropical rainforest. In the better-known collapsed states of Liberia and the Ivory Coast, civil wars and revolts are all about cocoa, diamonds and timber. Even in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the fight is over water as much as anything else, especially in the occupied West Bank, where Arabs are not allowed to drill new wells and Israeli settlers' wells are lowering the water table.

Journalist Robert Kaplan predicted all this in his seminal 1994 *Atlantic Monthly* essay, "The Coming Anarchy." Five years later, the University of Toronto's Thomas Homer-Dixon advanced Kaplan's thesis with his groundbreaking book *Environment, Scarcity and Violence*, setting out how environmental scarcities were contributing to insurrection, inter-ethnic warfare and other civil disturbances all over the world. Another five years on, Roy Woodbridge, author of *The Next World War*, made the case that we are on the brink of planetary warfare over diminishing resources, and nation states should be rallying around a single, critical organizing principle – the "provisioning" of societies with the basic necessities of civilized life.

Back on the banks of the Amur, Misha reflects back on the days when the Nanai tribe was strong and healthy, before everything collapsed. Back then he was a fisherman. Today, because of closures, he's a poacher. If there were fish on his hooks, his children and his grandchildren would eat, he said.

If not, then they would not eat.

*Terry Glavin is a Canadian journalist, author and conservationist.*





## SKY-HIGH PRICES

THOSE WHINGEING ABOUT REAL estate values rising out of reach of the average person have one more item to add to their list of complaints. Two New York City condo developers have agreed to pay a record \$430 per square foot for "air rights" above their property so that they can go ahead with the construction of a 35-story apartment block just a hop, skip and a jump away from Central Park.

The idea of air rights itself is ancient, and is intended to protect landowners from unauthorized construction over the top of their properties. But in modern cities, the air rights of low-lying buildings are routinely sold over to adjacent properties to allow developers to build taller structures.

What's remarkable about this transaction is that it shattered the existing high-end for air rights purchases, previously a measly \$200 per square foot. The lucky recipients of this development bonanza? A bibliophile society (\$7 million) and a Methodist church (\$30 million).

## KERFUFFLE OVER TRUFFLES

IN NOVEMBER, AN INTERNATIONAL CHARITY AUCTION witnessed the sale of a 1.2kg Italian white truffle for a record-breaking £95,000. The anonymous buyer bid on the truffle sight unseen via satellite link-up.

It was the second truffle in as many years to be purchased at a record-breaking price. In 2004, an

850g white truffle was auctioned off for £28,000 to the clients of a top London restaurant. That truffle met an untimely end, however, when it was discovered to be decomposing after too many days on display, and was ultimately interred in the head chef's garden.



## PIE-EYED LUXURY

AN ENGLISH CHEF RECENTLY BAKED WHAT IS BEING touted as the world's most expensive steak and mushroom pie. Spencer Burge created the recipe in Burnley, Lancashire at the Fence Gate Inn, where thick-walleted diners were invited to partake in one of eight £1000 slices.

The pie's ingredients include a reduction of two bottles of 1982 Chateau Mouton Rothschild wine (about £4,000), Wagyu beef from Japan (£500), rare Chinese mushrooms that are typically picked under the watch of armed guards (£2000), and, of course,

that old standby, black truffles. After baking, Chef Burge topped the pie off with 24k gold leaf, ensuring that the normally homely pastry displays its opulence as conspicuously as possible.

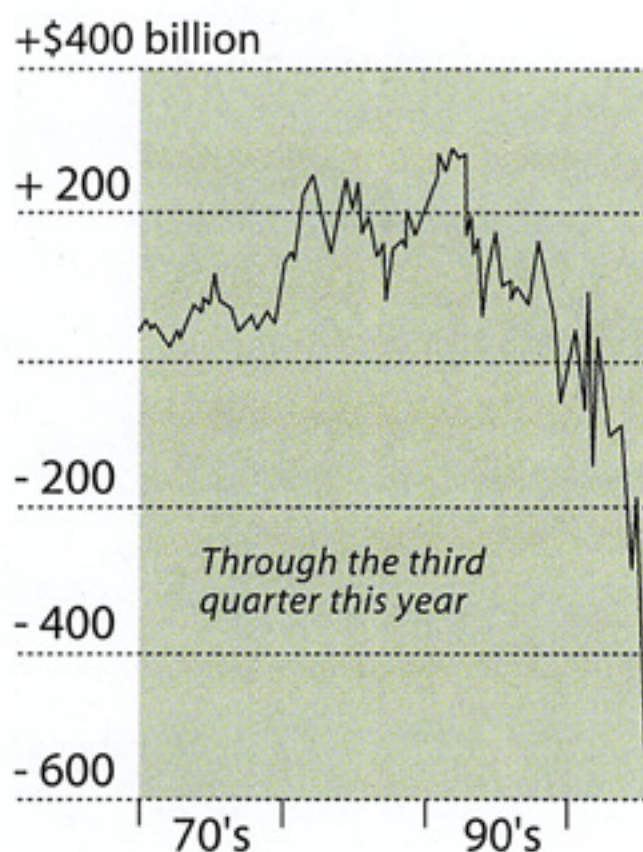
"It's a very sophisticated pie," explained Fence Gate owner Kevin Berkins in November, "It's like anything else – if you drive a Rolls-Royce, you know you are driving something prestigious."

*Clayton Dach*

## THE BORROW-TO-SPEND ORGY

Over the last five years, the average US household has spent more than it earned. For nearly 30 years previous, since around 1970, the exact opposite was true. By one estimate, based on figures from the third quarter of 2005, U.S. households spend \$531 billion a year more than their combined after-tax income.

**Household savings  
(based on earnings)**



"We're facing an unprecedented demographic tsunami and evacuation is not an option."

— *U.S. Comptroller General David Walker, referring to the 77 million American baby boomers who have just started turning 60.*

"Walker's not the only one saying it. As Congress and the White House struggle to trim up to \$50 billion from the federal budget over five years – just 3 percent of the \$1.6 trillion in deficits projected for that period – budget experts say the nation soon could face its worst fiscal crisis since at least 1983, when Social Security bordered on bankruptcy.

"Without major spending cuts, tax increases or both, the national debt will grow more than \$3 trillion through 2010, to \$11.2 trillion – nearly \$38,000 for every man, woman and child. The interest alone would cost \$561 billion in 2010, the same as the Pentagon."

— *Richard Wolf, USA Today, November 14, 2005*



### AMERICAN AGRICULTURE INCREASINGLY RESEMBLES A SOVIET FAILURE *says George Pyle*

---



NO POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OR economic system can succeed if it cannot feed its people. And one of the largest contrasts between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War was the success of American farming and the failure of Soviet agriculture.

Our independent farmers thrived during this period, while the Soviet farm-workers were little better off than czarist serfs, with no ability to make planting decisions and no motivation to improvise or even succeed. Indeed, in 1972, in tacit acknowledgement of their agricultural system's failure, the Russians sought to buy wheat from American farmers.

If Stalin could see American agriculture today, he'd assume his forced collectivization had caught on. Like its Soviet predecessor, modern American farming is characterized by centralization: an absence of open markets, decision-making by distant officials, and growing techniques that poison and exhaust the land.

Take the example of the modern chicken farmer. This year, 42.5 billion pounds of chicken will be raised in America by contract growers, using a system that starts with the chicken and not the egg. The only eggs a chicken farmer sees are in the supermarket. What he does see are truckloads of baby chicks that pull up to his built-to-corporate-specifications barn, the one he went half-million dollars into debt to buy. Ninety days later, more trucks come to take the slaughter-weight broilers away for processing.

Because the processing firm owns the birds – as many as 90,000 of them in one barn – they impose myriad rules. The chickens, for example, can only be fed a particular kind of feed, one usually purchased from the processing firm. If disease or a heatwave wipes out the flock, there's no pay for the grower. He has little to gain and everything to lose.

Ninety-five percent of the chickens Americans eat

are raised this way, by growers under contract. Many economists argue that a four-firm concentration of even 40 percent of a market effectively gives those four the power to set a commodity's price. And 50 percent of those chickens belong, from egg to supermarket, to one of four food giants. For the contract grower, it means all the processing firms pay almost exactly the same price. There's no incentive to improvise or raise healthier chickens to fetch a higher price – indeed, there are no penalties. The market is locked up and these farmers are locked in. In the beef and pork business it's worse, with four firms controlling 84 per cent and 64 percent, respectively, of those two markets.

Like Soviet collectivism, American agricultural monopolism is justified by one word: efficiency. And like loyal Communist Party members, we sit still while corporate agriculture justifies its control of food production by promising a quality product at the lowest possible cost.

Lowest cost to the corporations, yes. But what isn't factored in is the \$200 million Americans spend yearly to treat water pollution by runoff from animal wastes and crop fertilizer. Or, annual obesity-related healthcare costs the Centers for Disease Control estimates at \$117 billion, thanks, in part, to corn-fed, fatty food. Or what happens when rural communities, newly devoid of independent farms, die off.

Stalin is reputed to have said that the death of one man is a tragedy, while the death of millions is a statistic. The loss of one independent farmer is a statistic. The loss of millions of them is an ecological, social and economic disaster.

*George Pyle, a veteran of 25 years of Kansas newspapering, is the author of Raising Less Corn, More Hell: The Case for the Independent Farm and Against Industrial Food. He is now an editorial writer for the Salt Lake Tribune and can be reached at g.b.pyle@att.net. This piece first appeared in Orion magazine.*



## WE NEED AN AGRARIAN MOVEMENT SPREADING ACCROSS OUR LAND

*says Michael Ableman*



CLOSE TO 35 YEARS AGO, I JOINED a commune in southern California that was based on agrarian principles. On 4000 acres we had row crops, orchards, a goat and cow dairy, and grain and fiber crops. Besides feeding ourselves, we had our own natural food store,

bakery, juice factory and restaurant. We even made our own clothing, backpacks, and shoes.

I was given the responsibility of managing the 100-acre pear and apple orchard in a high desert valley east of Ojai, California. I was 18, with no orcharding experience, directing a crew of 30 people most of whom were older than I. The orchard had been abandoned for 15 years, and the branches had become so intertwined that you couldn't find the alleys between the rows.

I had attached to the door of my 20-foot unheated trailer Goethe's quote: "Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it." Now this could have ended up really bad, but there was something that took place down those rows of apple and pear trees, something very different than what is happening in most agricultural fields and orchards in North America today. I went to work each day with 30 of my friends, and while we worked we joked and talked, and we discussed our dreams. We tried out our latest theories and philosophies on each other, speculated on the fate of the earth, and ate our lunch together under the shade of the trees. In the winter we pruned every day for four months straight, in the spring we thinned fruit, and in the fall it was a 10-week harvest marathon.

It was repetitive work, but at the end of each day, instead of feeling I had been chained to some mind-numbing drudgery, I felt I had attended an all-day party. The work got done, the orchard thrived, and those organic apples and pears gained a reputation around the country. And while the cold nights and hot days of that high desert provided ideal growing

conditions, I am sure that fruit was equally infused with the energy of that group of people and the pleasure they found in each other and in that land.

This was my introduction to agriculture. This community experience has informed all of my agricultural endeavors since: it demonstrated that good food is more than just about the confluence of technique and fertile soil, that it is the result of men and women who love their land, and who bring passion to working with it.

That experience was my preview into the new agrarian movement that is now sweeping North America, a movement I believe embodies many of the most critical elements of a healthy society: reverence, mystery, humility, ecology in its wider sense and community. I wanted to pick up where I left off with my first book and visit and write about and photograph this movement, tell the good story, hold my heroes up for all to see. So my 24-year-old son Aaron and I left our own farm for a three-month journey across the US and Canada to document this quiet revolution. We visited farmers who had gone beyond organic and were redefining that movement, using their farms as platforms for education and social and ecological change.

We went to see folks who are happily married to a place, many of them master farmers, innovators, their farms incubators for the new agriculture, demonstrating that farming is not just some lowly drudgery, but that it is an art and a craft and an honorable profession. My new book, *Fields of Plenty*, introduces you to a few of these folks. I want you to see their faces and their land, hear a little about their story.

One of them, John Thurman, told me, "If you've farmed, you can run the world." I thought about that and about what it means to be a leader, and I realized how few true leaders there really are. We've got plenty of managers and legislators, actors and dictators and manipulators. But I'm talking about leaders, folks who have compassion, respect for diversity, creative vision, an understanding of our



true place in nature.

I wonder how it happened that lies and deception and obfuscation, greed and thievery and murder could have become the dominant characteristics required for government office.

So who are we going to be able to seek out to guide a society that has become so completely disconnected from the natural world, from the most fundamental necessities such as food and water. What will happen if there are more Katrinas? What will happen when the oil runs out?

John Thurman may be right. In a time when our primary connection tools to the world around us are the computer and the cell phone, those who have maintained an intimate connection with the land, whose daily work is inextricably connected to biology and botany and animal husbandry, those who know how to restore and nurture soil, care for animals, coax food from the earth may soon become very important to all of us.

The explosion of farmers' markets, the desire to meet face-to-face each week with the person who grew your nourishment goes deeper than the food; it may just be part of a desperate longing to have some connection to the real world.

So I strongly encourage each of you to make friends with a farmer – you're going to need them. For I am certain that as the current global industrial experiment comes apart, our society will once again have agriculture at its center.

This past spring I took my three-year-old son Benjamin out to a friend's cabin on the west coast of Vancouver Island. We had to drive through a

huge, fresh clearcut. I've seen a lot of ecological devastation, but there is nothing quite so exemplary of humans' most destructive ways as a rich, diverse, life-giving, oxygen-producing forest reduced to vast fields of stumps and brush and eroding soil. Little Benjamin had the most heartbreaking look of horror and dismay. I felt I had just unwittingly taken my young son to see a really violent film. When it came time to drive home, he pleaded with me not to drive back the same way we came.

"Why" is a word you hear a lot with a three-year-old, but there was a new persistence to Benjamin's why after our experience that day, and my responses could not satisfy.

I find myself asking why a lot these days as well. "Why" is a word we should all be asking of ourselves and of those who claim to be our leaders. What if after the events on 9/11, the United States had asked why instead of who? What if we could ask why in regard to the recent hurricanes?

As we bear witness to the disappearance of nature, and the disconnection of our society from it, we also see an increase in confusion, an extreme lack of compassion

and understanding of how to care for each other and our world, a loss of understanding in regard to cause and effect.

It takes a conscious effort to rise above the propaganda and lies, the litany of misdirected questions, to step out of the confusion and be like little Benjamin, come back into our beginner's mind, to our sense of childlike wonder, and start asking why as honestly and freshly and persistently as a three-year-old.





And I believe that to deal with the great unraveling taking place around us, we've got to come back home, immerse ourselves in that which goes on in our neighborhoods and communities, in our own backyards or on the land we farm. We can feel paralyzed by the broader world scene, but we have enormous power in and around the places where we live.

It doesn't really matter what the issue is: energy, water, food, waste, transportation, or even that pervasive sense of loneliness or disconnection that so many folks have, when you focus your attention on the local world, when you come back home, change is possible.

In a speech I gave just after 9/11, I proposed that we build an urban farm at the site of the World Trade Center, that it could become a model of local economy where once only the global was represented, that it would demonstrate that Americans are not just about revenge but that we can grow life and nourishment out of the ashes of violence and destruction.

We even submitted this outrageous proposal to the World Trade Center design contest, but, like many ideas for the rebuilding, this one was given some good press and then pushed aside in favor of 1776 stories of glass and cold steel.

Here we are again less than two months after another US disaster. The President and his cronies, purveyors of chaos that they are, are poised to make billions on the rebuilding effort. A flotilla of bulldozers is now being assembled to raze acres of what was once home to thousands of folks who are now scattered across the country in a modern-day diaspora.

A disaster yes, but also an unprecedented opportunity, a blank canvas, a chance to rebuild a city that could embody all of the most thoughtful and visionary social and ecological design components. Imagine how many people could be employed, how many could be fed, if the reconstruction included farms at the center of each neighborhood. There is enough land there to supply every New Orleans school lunch, every hotel and restaurant, every household in that city.

Our arrogance, our wholesale disconnection

from the natural world, our belief that somehow we are in control keeps us from recognizing the most fundamental law of nature, the one every good farmer is bound by: what we sow is what we reap, for every action there is a reaction, cause and effect. It's the law and none of us are immune to it.

At every turn, in each moment, and on the broader world stage we must bring forth the hopeful, positive alternatives and models. No matter how outrageous we may appear, we must gently and creatively and persistently repeat and remind and demonstrate that a new world is possible.



*Michael Ableman is a farmer, educator and founder of the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens in Goleta, California. The Center is based on one of the oldest organic farms in California, where Ableman farmed from 1981 to 2001. Today he lives and farms on an island in British Columbia with his wife and two sons. His most recent book is Fields of Plenty: A farmer's journey in search of real food and the people who grow it.*



TIPPING POINT







CHIP SOMDEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

Oil company executives dismiss price gouging questions at a November 9, 2005 US Senate Hearing with a collective shrug of the shoulders; "We don't control prices, the market does." At that moment, power suddenly slipped from civil society to corporations.



## BUSINESS AS USUAL

IT STARTS WITH A POLICE OFFICER LOOKING THE other way in exchange for a bribe. Or a bureaucrat pocketing some cash to ensure that a particular application ends up on the top of the pile. Bottom feeders on the food chain, often simply trying to keep up in a competitive world. Many who engage in the practice will insist they haven't done anything wrong: "How could I refuse a gift from someone who wanted to offer me a token of their appreciation?"

Such low-level corruption is all-too-familiar for the citizens of Zambia. Sure, they know that more serious graft happens in the upper echelons of government, but the lowly police officer is the one they have to deal with directly. They may be obliged to give a bribe at a roadblock. Or provide document processing "fees." They'll likely have to offer up gas money or taxi fare in order that the police can begin investigating. And to be fair, these "requests" are not unreasonable. The police genuinely don't have money to fill up the gas tank. They work in tiny, barren offices with dilapidated furniture and equipment. Their children are hungry. Economic justice advocates at Zambia's Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection estimate that it costs the equivalent of about \$380 per month to feed a family of six in the capital city of Lusaka. Police officers earn about \$100-\$200 a month. So to make up the difference, they engage in something Zambians commonly call "nichekeleko" – give me a share. That's life in Zambia. It's a matter of subsistence, not ethics. You'd do the same thing.

We commonly associate corrupt practices with developing countries. So we're not surprised to hear Transparency International predict that the post-war reconstruction effort in Iraq could amount to "the biggest corruption scandal in history." But who's benefitting? Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Root and Brown overcharged the US occupation government in Iraq \$108 million. Custer Battles bilked officials out of \$50 million. American businessman Philip Bloom paid over \$600,000 in kickbacks to US official Robert Stein in order to secure reconstruction contracts.

These crimes aren't the isolated acts of a handful of wayward entrepreneurs. They are the predictable consequence of a US administration policy to award lucrative no-bid contracts – paid out in \$100,000 plastic-wrapped bricks of cash – with

little accountability. In an interview with *Newsweek*, former senior advisor to the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority Frank Willis compared Iraq to the "wild west" because the US government has either refused or stalled when called to look into fraud cases. Since only \$4.1 billion of the \$18.7 billion earmarked for reconstruction has been spent, Willis believes that "the corruption will only get worse." Will American politicians – many of whom took great pleasure in scolding UN officials for failing to prevent the Iraq oil-for-food scandal – do anything about it?

It seems unlikely. After all, there's enough corruption back in Washington to worry about. Take Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff, for example. On its surface, Abramoff's story is a simple case of a prominent lobbyist accepting money from well-heeled clients in exchange for political decisions going in their favor. Business as usual, in other words. But what makes the story interesting isn't the callousness he showed towards his clients – Native American gambling officials whom he referred to in emails as "monkeys," "fucking troglodytes," and "stupid idiots" – or the embarrassingly juvenile way he went about it – "I'd love us to get our mitts on that moolah!!" And the scandal wasn't that Abramoff mixed money and politics. That's old news. The real crime seems to be his excess. Republican Senator John McCain told a Senate Indian Affairs Committee hearing: "Even in this town, where huge sums are routinely paid as the price of political success, the figures are astonishing." Indeed, before he agreed to a plea bargain, the crux of Abramoff's defence was that his actions were perfectly *routine* by Washington's standards. His lawyer issued a statement insisting that Abramoff was "being singled out by the media for actions that are commonplace in Washington and are totally proper."

It's true. Abramoff did exactly what any good lobbyist would do. And part of his success hinged on being best buds with Republican House Majority leader Tom DeLay – who is facing his own charges of influence-peddling and money laundering. It's no great surprise that DeLay also maintains he has done nothing wrong. Remember, this is a man who declared that money "is not the root of all evil in politics. In fact, money is the lifeblood of politics."



So he's a master at coming up with legislation that benefits his corporate donors and punishing fellow representatives who aren't on side. Hence his nickname: "the Hammer." Again, this wouldn't be so bad if it were isolated to one individual, but DeLay heads arguably the most dominant political machine in American politics. He is one of the chief architects of the K Street Project, an effort to fill Washington's most powerful trade groups, law firms, and lobbying organizations with conservative, activist Republicans – ideally former aides and confidants like Abramoff. This vast network fosters a sophisticated and pervasive culture of corruption and seasoned political reporter Jonathan Alter suggests that future historians will consider the period of DeLay's "ruthless shakedown machine" as "the single most corrupt decade in the long and colorful history of the House of Representatives."

It's a damning statement, and it's important to hold DeLay's feet to the fire. But in focusing on the powerbrokers, we sometimes miss the more pervasive, if subtler, forms of structural corruption. Practices that are so woven into the fabric of the economy, we don't immediately see the problem with them. Consider a recent development in the US medical field. Under a scheme called "gainsharing," doctors are financially rewarded for using medical

devices manufactured by the nation's three largest orthopedic device companies. Surgeons who switch to one of the three brands get a 20 percent cut of any cost savings that result, and those who already used the brands get a 15 percent cut. The scheme's originators insist that it will help drive down costs and therefore benefit everyone in the long run. But even if this were true, is it really a good idea for doctors to make operating room decisions based on how much they stand to benefit personally? The relationship between medical professionals and manufacturers is already too cozy. Some doctors enter into exclusivity contracts with certain companies where, in exchange for lucrative consulting fees, they promise to only use a particular manufacturer's device. Sales reps who work according to commission are bound to flog the most pricey option. Perhaps it's the for-profit nature of the American health care system that makes it so susceptible to kickbacks and other scams. Regardless, it should be enough to make us pause next time we look askance at the modest Third World police man collecting his share. Instead of judging "those" people, we would be well-served to look inward at the sophisticated payola schemes so fundamentally engrained in our own economies.

*Nicholas Klassen*

## ACCEPTABLE DEATH RATE

US heart defibrillator maker Guidant Corporation is in the hot seat after internal documents revealed that company officials knowingly marketed faulty products that could cause death. An electrical problem meant 15 out of every 10,000 units were likely to short circuit, with almost 12 percent of such cases resulting in a "life threatening" incident. In business-speak, this is termed an "acceptable failure rate." As Dr. William H. Maisel – chairman of the Food and Drug Administration advisory committee that reviews heart devices – told the *New York Times*, "For Guidant, these people are numbers. Their descriptions are full of numbers. But for me, these patients are people." The worst part about Guidant's negligence was that it took the company three years to disclose that it was aware of the problem. Even then, the admission was prompted by the fact that the *Times* was about to publish a story exposing the scandal.

## NABBING THE DRUG PUSHER

In October, Pharmaceutical manufacturer Serono Labs plead guilty to illegally marketing its AIDS drug Serostim and agreed to fork out \$704 million to resolve criminal charges and civil allegations. In one instance, the company offered doctors an all-expenses-paid junket to Cannes, France in exchange for writing up to 30 prescriptions of the drug, which cost \$21,000 per 12-week course. Other charges stemmed from promoting devices that were not FDA approved, and coaxing doctors to fob the costs of Serostim off to Medicaid and other payers. The company will be unable to access federal health care programs for at least five years, but in a bit of creative plea bargaining, its subsidiary, Serono holding, was excluded from the ban.

Still, the chief upside of the settlement is that it includes a lucrative thank you to the whistleblower who raised flags about Serono's misconduct. Under the whistleblower provisions of the False Claims Act, they will share in approximately \$51.8 million.



It was a real shock to see praise in your pages for “major oil companies like BP and Shell,” which, according to Erik Assadourian in his piece “Corporate Culture Must Evolve” [Adbusters #63], are beginning to create business models that are “truly sustainable.”

Spring 2006 will see the opening of BP’s Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, through which one million barrels of oil will flow every day, for over 40 years – if it survives that long. Shell is also committed to processing, year after year, ever-increasing amounts of fossil fuels. That sounds to me like the definition of “unsustainable.”

The group I work with is struggling to present a truer portrait of the oil industry than that presented by its massive advertising and sponsorship programs. We really don’t need to be fighting rearguard actions to make sure that magazines like *Adbusters* don’t slip into the oily murky greenwash as well!

How about sticking to the analysis heavily hinted at in much of your external presentation, i.e. that the corporation is essentially psychotic in nature? Far from needing to evolve, corporate (and capitalist) culture needs to be eroded by “positive rust,” and fast.

MICK BROUGHAN

*Art Not Oil / London Rising Tide*  
London, UK

## BIG OIL WANTS TO BE LOVED

Every time fuel prices go up, public rage increases accordingly. And since oil companies are enjoying billions of dollars in profits these days, consumers know precisely where to focus their anger. A survey commissioned by the Civil Society Institute revealed that 87 percent of Americans think that the oil industry is gouging customers.

Predictably, oil executives are pleading innocence and claiming that the market determines gas prices without any input from them. But they’re concerned enough that the industry’s chief lobbying agency – the American Petroleum Institute – has rolled out a PR campaign to polish Big Oil’s image. It started with print ads in major US daily newspapers that urged “consumers to adopt conservation measures this winter” and ask government to remove “barriers on the production of natural gas on federal lands.” Then they moved to TV, with 15-second spots promoting conservation during news and public affairs shows. So they’re being good stewards, right? More likely they’re concerned about ever-dwindling supplies. Once the oil runs out, it won’t matter what the public thinks of them. Until then, there’s money to be made.

ซ่อมหัวฟรี  
รับประกันคุณภาพ  
ค่าเครื่องปรับอากาศ

เชลล์ แก๊สโซฮอล์ 95  
รับประกันคุณภาพที่ใครก็สบายใจ

ขอความไว้วางใจของคุณ เราได้ใส่ใจในทุกขั้นตอน ตั้งแต่การคัดเลือกน้ำมันดิบคุณภาพดี ไปจนถึงการกลั่นและปรับปรุงคุณภาพให้เหมาะสมกับเครื่องยนต์ของคุณ เราได้คำนึงถึงสิ่งแวดล้อม และความปลอดภัยของคุณ เราได้เลือกใช้วัสดุและสีที่ทนทาน และปลอดภัยที่สุด

เชลล์ แก๊สโซฮอล์ 95 นำมาซึ่งคุณภาพที่เรากลับมาประกัน ขอความไว้วางใจ โทร. 02-260-1988

เชลล์  
แก๊สโซฮอล์ 95

www.shell.co.th/Gasohol95

ไม่หยุดนิ่ง...เพื่อสิ่งที่ดีกว่า

I work at Shell Oil and thought I’d share this little gem of corporate life with you. It’s an ad for the launch of Gasohol 95 in Thailand. And to me, it shows how the staff here are totally disconnected from the wider implications of their work. Aside from the connotations of the dripping fuel pump about to be rammed into a mouth, am I the only one who sees a blatantly racist caricature?

Anonymous



### REVERSING THE ROLES OF DEBTOR AND CREDITOR

Smug residents basking in the comfort of industrialized countries are in for a shock; it turns out we're in debt to the world's poor, not vice versa. In his recent book, *Ecological Debt*, UK economist Andrew Simms states that under a planetary survival model of carbon consumption – which allots a fair share of 0.43 annual tons per person – so-called African Highly Indebted Poor Countries are in credit and G7 nations in debt. Under this framework, the US is impoverished – with every citizen owing 4.87 tons to the wider global community.

Estimating that the consequences of G7 nations' arrears are liable to cause non-industrialized countries \$11.3 trillion in damage over the next 20 years, Simms predicts that climate change will end up in court with submerged islands suing gas-guzzlers and Europe taking the US to the WTO for its uncompetitive failure to cut emissions.

Since industrialized nations have spent decades, through the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, insisting poorer countries reshape their economies and lifestyles via structural adjustment programs, surely it would be churlish to reject a future role reversal. The alternative is stark, either the law or war will be the final arbiter.

### ITHACA HEALTH ALLIANCE

In the 1940s, a group of farmers in Saskatchewan, Canada, formed a medical cooperative. Within two decades, they had inspired a similar plan that covered the entire province of Saskatchewan. By 1971, it had widened in scope to encompass all of Canada.

This is the kind of growth Paul Glover envisions for the health plan he founded in Ithaca, USA in 1997. For \$100 a year, the 1000-plus members of the Ithaca Health Alliance can access a variety of preventive and emergency grants, from \$20 for an eye exam to \$3,000 towards treating broken bones. The payouts are made quickly – usually overnight. Glover once bumped into an Alliance member with a claim, and paid him immediately with cash on hand.

But the grants are only one aspect of a more comprehensive health plan. The Alliance emphasizes preventive and holistic approaches to healing and puts a considerable percentage of its budget towards education and outreach programs, as well as a soon-to-be opened free clinic.

Glover recently moved to Philadelphia and is set to launch a similar health plan called PhilaHealthia. Problem is, he's stalled because the stuffy bureaucrats at the Pennsylvania Insurance Department ordered him to cease and desist. Upsetting the status quo – and the massive health insurers that like things just the way they are – is never easy.

*To find out more, visit [www.ithacahealth.org](http://www.ithacahealth.org) or [www.philahealthia.org](http://www.philahealthia.org).*

### UNCHAINING AMERICA

WE SEE THE BLEAK CYCLE IN ALMOST ANY TOWN OR city: corporate chains proliferating, mom and pop businesses driven out, and communities homogenized in the process. Yet in the face of this dismal trend, a backlash is building, sparking some inspired and creative new organizing strategies.

At the forefront are Independent Business Alliances (IBAs) – community-based coalitions that unite citizens, non-profits and independent, locally-owned businesses of all kinds in the common goal of

stopping corporate dominance of local economies and supporting home-town businesses.

The idea is simple – there's strength in numbers. From small villages like Warwick, NY, to the sprawling city of St. Louis, these alliances are helping communities beat back the threat of losing their character and economic vitality to chains that vacuum profits out of town and into the hands of corporate shareholders.

Group purchasing, co-op advertising, educational



campaigns about the benefits of doing business locally, and political action are all part of the mix that has led 20 US communities to launch IBAs since Boulder, Colorado inspired the movement with the first in Alliance in 1998.

The story isn't just a self-interested fight for survival by small business owners, it involves citizens taking charge of their communities and refusing to be demeaned as mere consumers, limited to "voting with their dollars."

For example, in 2003, Austin, Texas planned to give away \$2 million in public money for construction of a Borders Books and Music superstore within two blocks of two long-time independent book and music sellers. Austin IBA members fought back. After commissioning a study that showed each dollar spent at the local shops would return over three times as much to the local economy as one spent at Borders (and that Borders' sales would come at their expense), the IBA rallied public opposition to the corporate welfare scheme and stopped it cold.

Tellingly, without the subsidy, Borders pulled out

of the planned development. Left to compete on a level field against two strong independents, Borders executives decided free-market competition wasn't their thing.

An umbrella organization, the Montana-based American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA), was formed in 2001 to help communities start organizing and provides a communication network for the local IBAs. Jennifer Rockne, AMIBA's director, says the Austin example is illustrative of systemic problems that the group is positioning itself to tackle as it grows. "Laws at every level of government stack the deck against entrepreneurs, co-ops, workers and others in favor of politically powerful corporations," said Rockne.

"We're showing people that chain growth is not inevitable. Once our movement grows big enough to stop the favoritism, they'll become extremely vulnerable. And it will happen sooner than you think."

*Jeff Milchen co-founded the first IBA in Boulder and the AMIBA. Learn more at [www.amiba.net](http://www.amiba.net).*

**ADBUSTERS**

100% ORGANIC HEMP UPPER

SWEET SPOT (FOR KICKING CORPORATE ASS)

RECYCLED TIRE SOLE

VEGETARIAN LEATHER

HAND DRAWN ANTI-LOGO

UNION MADE

## THE BLACKSPOT UNSWOOSER

Earth-friendly, anti-sweatshop, cruelty-free, and pro-grassroots, Blackspots are the only rough-and-ready shoes designed to give toxic megacorporations what they truly need the most: a swift kick in the brand.

One pair = one vote in The Blackspot Anticorporation. Together, we'll give birth to a whole new sneaker biz, then move on to Blackspot other dysfunctional industries – Big Music, fast food, coffee shops, you name it.

**BLACKSPOTSNEAKER.ORG**



## JUST PLAYING ALONG IS THE ROOT OF OUR ANGST AND ANXIETY

*says Kelli Hutchinson*

I RECENTLY QUIT MY JOB AT A LOCAL CALL CENTER. I reached a point where I stopped enjoying my time off because I dreaded the thought of work the following day. It wasn't the call center itself or the people there who unnerved me. It was the follow-the-script-or-else mentality and the constant repetition with no room for originality that slowly exhausted me. Occasionally a caller would interrupt my spiel to share a poignant life story, but detailed conversations were discouraged as they tied up the lines. I'd find myself tensing before each call thinking: Don't be someone who asks questions. Just play along. Please, just play along.

That attitude – “just playing along” – is toxic. And its prevalence is pretty high in America these days. Playing along is, in my opinion, the root cause of what has been deemed the “quarter life crisis” or QLC – that post-collegiate period of angst and anxiety. The QLC sets in when over- and under-achievers alike realize securing a career hinges less on achievements and more on creating the perfect cover letter, wherein we reduce our accomplishments and personalities to a few well-crafted sentences we hope jive well enough with a corporation's talking points to allow us a chance in the door. For many twixters – as QLC sufferers have been dubbed – playing along has begun to mean we must transform ourselves into commodities before we can be taken seriously as people. I believe the challenge for today's 20-somethings is to discover we have a hand in shaping the world and that, although it seems otherwise, branding ourselves is not necessary unless we deem it so.

Today the baby boomers deal with their version of playing along by going out of their way to appear as though they aren't playing along. Sometimes this means conspicuously spending thousands on merchandise in order to illicit a sense of the bohemian spirit. Other times, it means attending flashy parties and bragging about how you would never waste so much money on a dress like your neighbor's. Many boomers push the idea that

we should strive to lead flawless lives. But living flawlessly is an unattainable goal. Those who try it forgo their humanity and begin living more like machines. They define themselves by consumption, sell their souls in a cover letter and stick to the script at all costs.

Additionally, it seems the boomers' push for a perfect world has been twisted by leaders with less than perfect goals. Citizens afraid of disturbing a tenuously held equilibrium refuse to ask any questions, and tension builds at an individual and national level. Many of my acquaintances have turned to substance abuse as a means of escaping the tense, mechanistic aspects of their lives. I've watched as this problem goes untreated because the users feel they must hide it in an effort to maintain the illusion of perfection. Others recognize the pointlessness of drugs and attempt to sustain a life that is outwardly mechanical but inwardly fulfilling. However, as the job at the call center taught me, an outwardly mechanical life leaves little energy to be inwardly fulfilled. The most wholesome people burn out young, their potential lost like ash on the wind.

Frustrated by a scripted existence, I quit working at the call center and thought about the most genuine time of my life. It was grades two through five. Now a substitute teacher, my experience with inquisitive, precocious middle schoolers reminds me of the beauty in chaos. The problem with playing along is that it leads to the creation of an artificial society that exhausts itself sustaining an illusion. Perhaps by drawing on the simple wisdom of a more sincere time, we'll find the key to a positive revolution that dismantles perfection and paves the way to an honest future.

*Kelli Hutchinson received a BA in 2004 and is now back in school for teacher certification. She studies, teaches, writes, volunteers and, sometimes, acts in Rome, Georgia, USA. She can be reached at [kelli@avantguild.com](mailto:kelli@avantguild.com).*



PAX AMERICANA





WINSTON SMITH

PHONE

5855

PENNSYLVANIA

The visionaries of Pax Americana were faced with a quandary after September 11: enlist the support of the international community, or go it alone. Sadly, they chose the latter.

WINSTON SMITH

PHONE

5855

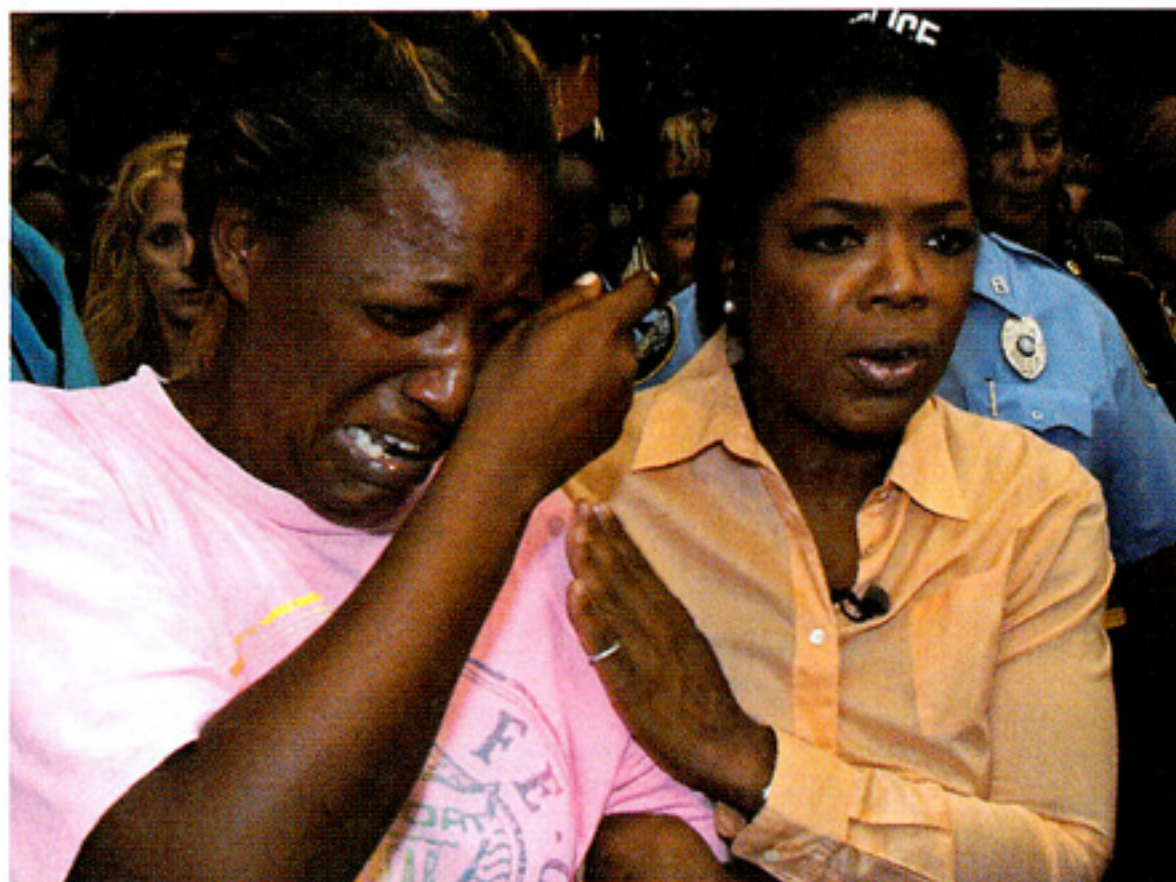
PENNSYLVANIA

The visionaries of Pax Americana were faced with a quandary after September 11: enlist the support of the international community, or go it alone. Sadly, they chose the latter.



## UNITED STATES

➔ HOW DO YOU PRICE OUT A WAR? PRIOR TO the US invasion of Iraq, George Bush's economic adviser, Larry Lindsey suggested the effort would cost \$200 billion. The White House balked at the number as too high, but almost three years later, the true figure is likely 10 times Lindsey's prediction. By considering costs such as lifetime disability and healthcare for injured troops, and the war's drain on the US economy, Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel prize-winning Columbia University economics professor, and Linda Bilmes, a Harvard budget expert, estimate that the war could easily cost \$2 trillion. The scariest part? They were holding back: "Our estimates are very conservative, and it could be that the final costs will be much higher. And it should be noted they do not include the costs of the conflict to either Iraq or the UK."



OPRAH WINFREY ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSTON ASTRODOME COMFORTING HURRICANE KATRINA VICTIM, MARY LEE QUINN.

➔ AS A BLACK WOMAN WITH A HISTORY OF weight problems, Oprah Winfrey wasn't an obvious candidate to become the world's most powerful media figure. It may also be difficult to imagine her as a bold advocate for that endangered species, good journalism. But last year, Winfrey earned her journalism cred with stunning coverage of the New Orleans disaster that put the networks to shame. Even more courageous was a special report in the June 2005 edition of *O* magazine on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Not only did the magazine send a reporter to spend a month in the West Bank and Gaza, it offered readers a rare view inside Palestinian life, mentioning facts typically ignored in western coverage, such as UN reports on the 25,000 Palestinian homes damaged or destroyed by Israeli forces and the death toll for Palestinian children – 600 since 2000. Oprah's Angel Network awards a grant to programs that work to prevent Palestinian children from becoming suicide bombers and suggests contributing to a UNICEF program offering summer camps and trauma treatment to Palestinian children.

## CANADA

➔ THAT EVER-EXPLOSIVE MIX OF SPORTS AND politics was front and center at the 2006 World Junior Hockey Championships in Canada. Even in games that had no bearing on the Canadian team, fans cheered for the Americans' opponent and enthusiastically chanted "US sucks." It was impossible not to notice the heightened animosity compared to previous tournaments held in Canada, and *USA Today* hockey writer Kevin Allen observed

It's really disturbing that I have to walk by military recruiters at my school every Tuesday and Thursday. Friends of mine who are considering military service do so because their grades aren't good. But why can't the government just encourage them to do well in school? Or give them options other than the military? It makes me sick and it's time we do something about it. Recruiters don't belong in high schools. My friends and I shouldn't be exposed to them in our place of learning. Here's a great idea: blackspot military recruiters at schools.

WHIT ALLEN (AGE 16)  
*Eaglecrest High School*  
Aurora, USA



“It’s a shame that world events have led to this fracture in Canadian-American relations.”

But it’s not just the residents of Soviet Canuckistan – a Pat Buchanan dig that many Canadians have embraced – who have soured on the US. A recent poll by Australia’s center-right think tank the Lowry Institute found that only 58 percent of Australians have a positive view of the US. Likewise, the 2005 Pew Global Attitudes Survey indicated that only 55 percent of Britons held a favorable opinion of the US. It was the fifth year in a row that favorable views of the US have dipped in Britain.

It’s no revelation to point out that there is a healthy dose of anti-Americanism in the world today. But Canada, Australia and the UK represent three of Uncle Sam’s closest allies. The bully may want to



CANADIAN FANS AT THE 2006 WORLD JUNIOR HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS IN VANCOUVER.



After reading the National Review’s 50th anniversary ‘mother of all special editions,’ liberal literary-masochists would have to concede

one thing: those neo-cons sure have balls. But buoyant mental health? Not so much.

Frothing with all the righteous indignation of the up-trodden, its august pages psychoanalyze the right, juxtaposing pomp and paranoia, and straddling questionable, if not downright delusional, contradictions.

Parts are predictable enough: luminaries like Jeb Bush, Dick Cheney, Casper W. Weinberger and the right’s answer to George Clooney, wait for it – Tom Selleck – line up to outdo each others’ glowing testimonials about “What NR Meant to Me.” Wheel of Fortune game show host Pat Sajak adds real political gravitas by thanking it for giving him the “clarity of perspective and intellectual ammunition to fight the battles that needed to be fought.” Sadly

there’s no word from Barbie doll co-host Vanna White.

But the Review cannot resist simultaneously playing the victim card, because while the right controls the White House, Senate, House of Representatives, Supreme Court and media, they’re still somehow the underdogs in all this.

If the victim-complex chokes, the pious bloodlust positively nauseates, but commentators have no problem straddling the moral high-ground while plumbing the depths of journalistic integrity. It’s hard not to laugh out-loud reading neocon doyenne Midge Decter’s opener: “Anyone with a minimally dispassionate sense of history would have to judge that George W. Bush conducted the Iraq war brilliantly.” And if you like that, you’ll love Jonah Goldberg’s defense of torture.

But most worrying is what didn’t merit publication. Like the environment: which didn’t get a single mention in the entire bumper issue. Also absent is any contemplation of the ever-rising \$8-trillion national debt or mistakes in Iraq. Sure there’s an article by James

Q. Wilson asking why those shift New Orleans blacks can’t get their shit together, but ad copy from corporate cheerleaders GM and FOX leaves scant space for negative thoughts.

Maybe it’s because self-doubt is a liberal slur. Maybe it’s because dissent has been tuned out so completely the movement has nothing left to rail against and grows fat and complacent, strangling the daring creativity that gave Reagan and the neocons their time in the sun. But one thing is clear, while the right might still be in the saddle riding roughshod over the rest of us; they’ve nowhere new to go. This was not a rallying call for the future bristling with new ideas; but a self-indulgent retrospective, claiming credit – however dubiously – for crushing “the evil empire,” trumpeting supply-side economics, and castrating Bill Clinton’s healthcare reforms; but offering little for this century, apart from an encore. By the end you’re left with an unshakeable image of pompous old man, reliving the glory days, while trying – but failing – to shake off the feeling that he just isn’t making as much sense as he used to.



consider why even his playmates are throwing sand at him.

➡ THANKS TO GLOBAL WARMING, THE ICE encasing the Arctic Ocean is, on average, 35 percent thinner than it was just three decades ago. You might consider this cause for alarm, but shipping companies are licking their chops; they may finally be able to use the long-elusive Northwest Passage, a “Panama canal of the north” that shaves off over 7000 kilometers on a trip between Europe to Asia.

But Canadians are nervous. The route snakes through their country’s unspoiled Arctic archipelago and they’re worried that oil tankers and rusty freighters could soon be cruising through the fragile ecosystem.

So the government has moved to assert Canadian sovereignty in the area, pointing to historical usage and designating the stretch as “internal waters.” This has set up a conflict with the US and Europe who insist that the Northwest Passage is an international strait, open without restriction. In 1969 and 1985 Washington pushed the envelope by sending ships through the Arctic without asking for Ottawa’s permission.

Provocative moves to be sure, but to this point, the disagreement over the passage has been a polite one between friends. Will it stay that way? As we inch ever-closer to a planetary endgame, disagreements over access to resources – even among allies – will only escalate. The pristine waters of Canada’s north make up 10 percent of the world’s freshwater. It’s only a matter of time before that water becomes as hot an international commodity as oil is today. So Canadians can expect a lot more activity on their Arctic front. They would be well-served to shore it up before it’s too late.

## IRAN

➡ EVERYONE HATES A JERK; ESPECIALLY ONE THAT won’t shut up. First, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that Israel needed to be “wiped off the map.” Then, he insisted the Holocaust hadn’t happened. And as if all that wasn’t enough, he subsequently suggested Israel be moved to North America or Europe. Sympathetic commentators insisted the tirades were necessary for Ahmadinejad to solidify his position by appealing to both his



IRANIANS BURN FLAGS DURING AN ANTI-ISRAEL RALLY ON ‘AL-QUDS DAY’ (JERUSALEM DAY) IN TEHRAN

opponents and supporters in Iran. We suspect there’s a more sophisticated – and less malevolent – way of doing that. For all parties concerned, let’s hope Ahmadinejad can turn down the hate and become a statesman. Until he does that, he’s just a racist asshole.

➡ SPECULATION MOUNTS AMONG GEOPOLITICAL analysts that Iran’s nuclear crisis masks another threat, far greater to the US economy than any bomb: the end of the Petrodollar.

Starting in March, a third stock market will compete against the existing American-owned oil exchanges in London and New York. But unlike the IPE and NYMEX, Iran’s Oil Bourse would scrap the dollar’s 70-year hegemony as the world’s de facto oil currency by introducing the Petroeuro.

The switch makes economic sense for the world’s second-largest crude producer since US sanctions mean exports to that country are non-existent while Euro-zone nations account for 45 percent of trade.

But increasing numbers of commentators – from Aljazeera to the *Asia Times* – are identifying other motives. Carnegie Endowment Iran expert George Perkovich views the Bourse as part of a “very intelligent, creative Iranian strategy to go on the offense in every way possible and mobilize other actors against the US.”

If, after all, the Petrodollar’s monopoly ends, then oil-importers have no reason to stockpile most of their foreign currency reserves in greenbacks. Instead, they can buy euros, which have rallied over 40 percent against the dollar since 2001.

This would accelerate the move away from dollars – which currently account for 70 percent of global



reserves – and fatally undermine the debt-ridden US economy's ability to consistently spend beyond its means. According to the Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability, imports would start costing Americans "a lot more" and "the property and stock market bubbles would, without doubt, burst."

Arguing that an international run on the dollar would "make the Great Depression look like a bounced check" *Muckraker Report* blogger and financial analyst Ed Haas links US nervousness to the Federal Reserve's little-publicized decision to send 97 years of publishing the world's dollar supply, the M-3 Index, beginning in March.

But don't underestimate the US. While calls to take a hard line against Iran do not quite match the intensity of the anti-Iraq rhetoric of the past few years, there is a striking parallel. One of Saddam Hussein's final acts as dictator was to ditch dollar reserves and make the Petroeuro the sole Oil for Food Program currency. These two moves coincided with the US's most recent recession. And two months after the invasion, dollar supremacy was restored.

## AUSTRALIA

➔ BUSHFIRES HAVE ENDED A LONG, HOT Christmas break that race riots began. Prime Minister John Howard firmly denied that Australia was a racist nation, but the assault with knives and baseball bats of immigrant Lebanese and their shops and cars, and three violent days and nights when gangs of white youths face-tattooed with Australian flags "reclaimed the beaches" by driving swarthy



AUSTRALIAN YOUTHS ATTACK A MAN OF MIDDLE EASTERN DESCENT ON A TRAIN AT CRONULLA, SYDNEY.

sunbathers out of Cronulla and Maroubra and burning a mosque, made it feel that way. And worse was to come.

New terror laws were rushed through parliament along with new laws disempowering unions, university student groups, disabled workers and anyone unfairly sacked, underpaid or on strike. Meanwhile, even though the rioters had clearly breached a provision banning the incitement of hatred against a minority group, the shock jocks who had egged the rioters on were not arrested or jailed for nine years, as required by the new Sedition laws. Nor were the young men whose text messages had summoned van loads of tattooed hooligans to Cronulla on the first incendiary Sunday.

The difficulty for Howard is that the rioters are his people. His decade-long harassment of Aborigines, Afghan refugees and Muslim clerics after 9/11, his refusal to condemn the white-power Hansonites when they first erupted into politics, his locking up and tormenting of Muslim children in "detention facilities" in the desert or off-shore islands, and his craven xenophobic rhetoric – "We will decide who comes here and the circumstances in which they come" – has inflamed and emboldened the rioters.

And now he is reaping the whirlwind. Beach attendances are down, and Cronulla businesses are going to the wall. Tourism is down, with many Asians now preferring New Zealand. Business confidence is down, and the Christmas figures "disappointing." The riots played big on overseas television, and civilized Australians are getting slowly used to their country looking like Rhodesia in the 1960s.

As if all that weren't bad enough, all expectation of the much touted Aussie "fair go" is gone. The state schools and the once-great universities are being starved to the bone. Everyone's wages are coming down, and the \$50 million Howard spent pushing his cruel new sacking laws on prime time television has gone, if not unnoticed, unpunished. What's more, the Sedition laws could, if applied, send to prison for nine years any stand-up comedian or newspaper cartoonist simply doing his job.

Slowly, we are being crushed by a now familiar, millennial kind of watchful, dull, Neo-fascist tyranny. And it's a pity.

*Bob Ellis is a screenwriter, film director, speechwriter, and one of Australia's leading journalists*



## LATIN AMERICA

➔ AFTER DECADES UNDER THE DUAL YOKE OF US interference and their own nefarious right-wing governments, Latin Americans are pushing back. Argentina just repaid its final International Monetary Fund loan – in effect thumbing its nose at the US and the neoliberal economic agenda it represents. Elsewhere, the citizens of Venezuela, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Bolivia have elected leaders with strong social agendas and promises to resist economic bullying from the North.

As Washington's influence on the continent wanes, charismatic firebrands like Venezuela's Hugo Chavez are filling the void. An unprecedented wave of creative energy has been loosed upon Latin America. And it will only get more interesting. Elections are scheduled for nearly two dozen countries in South America, Central America and the Caribbean this year – including Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and Peru.

### REDRAWING THE POLITICAL MAP OF LATIN AMERICA

➔ CHRISTIAN VARGAS WATCHES AS HIS FELLOW Bolivians dance and sing, waving rainbow-colored indigenous flags. They are celebrating the presidential victory of Evo Morales, the first indigenous Latin American president in over five centuries.

"At times I was ashamed of what I was, but now,



SUPPORTERS OF BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT EVO MORALES CELEBRATING ON ELECTION NIGHT

no more," says an emotional Vargas. "I am mestizo, descendant of indigenous people. And now I'm going to finally feel free and proud of that."

The election of Morales is the latest example of a growing wave of indigenous resistance across Latin America, including real power gains by the long-marginalized communities. From the Zapatistas of Mexico to the Mapuche of Chile, indigenous groups have been demanding change and making their voices heard. Though their specific demands may vary, two common threads come to the fore: the demand for autonomy and the rejection of the neo-liberal "free-market" economic model.

Beginning in the late 1980s, this Washington-championed economic model prescribed privatization of state industries and public services, elimination of labor protections, and increased exploitative resource extraction and development. So in the past two decades, the reins of Latin American economies have been placed in the hands of foreign corporations and trade and financial institutions that are unaccountable to local communities. The economic and social fallout has landed disproportionately on Latin America's indigenous and poor.

And they're fed up. In Chile, Mapuche efforts to wrest back control of their land from multinational forestry companies have sometimes resulted in violence. To the north, Ecuadorian Quichua leader Blanca Chancosa condemned an Andean trade agreement with the US as a fraudulent "way to appropriate natural resources, to appropriate water. This is the same as appropriating life."

In Bolivia, Morales and his Movement Toward Socialism party have promised to give power to the indigenous population. The new president plans to nationalize Bolivia's natural gas resources and establish a constituent assembly to allow Bolivia's indigenous majority a role in rewriting the country's constitution.

Morales' rise, and the wave of social struggle which made it possible, marks the thin edge of the wedge for what is possible outside the borders of this small nation. International expectations of Bolivia's ability to lend strength to other indigenous struggles and embolden regional opposition to neo-liberal politics, are high. As Morales notes, what is happening in Bolivia "is not only the hope of Bolivia, but the hope of Latin America."

While many in Bolivia question whether the new government can actually accomplish the profound



change it has promised, the sole fact that Morales has come this far signifies a redrawing of the power lines of indigenous struggle in Bolivia and beyond. Vargas speaks for so many when he insists, "this is something historic." How much hope does he have for the new government? "All the hope in the world."

*Gretchen Gordon is a writer and researcher on Latin America and Globalization. She currently lives in Cochabamba, Bolivia and can be reached at Graciela@riseup.net.*

## BURMA

➔ IN MAY 1997, ON THE HEELS OF THE BURMESE government's violent crackdown on its democratic opposition, the Clinton administration prohibited Americans from investing in Burma or helping others do so. Six years later, after democracy activist Aung San Suu Kyi's motorcade was attacked and she was placed under house arrest, President George Bush further tightened the economic noose on Burma's military leaders by freezing their assets, imposing travel restrictions and banning imports from Burma. Burmese garment factories subsequently lost \$350 million in sales to the US, but since they were privately owned, it's hard to gauge how the military junta was affected. At the very least, associates, apologists and supporters of the junta would have been impacted.

In terms of the ultimate goal, however, the effectiveness of the sanctions is highly questionable. To date, the Burmese government has made no moves toward a meaningful and inclusive democratic system. Progress on the seven-point "Road Map to Democracy" introduced in 2003 has been painfully slow. The latest initiative – the resumption of the National Convention – has again failed to produce genuine debate about a civilian elected government and the future role of Burma's ethnic groups. Burma's main opposition group, National League for Democracy (NLD), is conspicuously absent from the proceedings, and its leader, Suu Kyi, remains under house arrest.

This intractable democratic deficit is due largely to the lack of a cohesive international effort to pressure Burma. Thus far, only the US has been willing to impose "hard sanctions." European



BURMESE REFUGEES PROTESTING OUTSIDE THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES IN NEW DELHI, INDIA

Union measures have been decidedly limited in scope. Embargoes on arms sales and visa bans for government officials have been on the books since the late 1990s. Investment sanctions were introduced in 2004, but they were significantly diluted due to objections from the French, German and Austrian governments. While the sanctions prohibit EU companies from making financing available to certain businesses owned by the state, they do not include a ban on actual investment by EU companies or citizens. They also don't include a ban on Burmese imports, nor do they apply to the profitable oil, timber and gas sectors. Europe-based Burmese democracy activist Harn Yawngghwe lamented "In reality these sanctions are nothing. They just say we are unhappy with the situation."

Thanks to these toothless measures, French energy giant TOTAL continues to help the junta get rich. TOTAL linked up with the state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise to build the Yadana Pipeline. The construction relied on forced labor and caused the forced relocation of villages. Since 2002, the junta has reportedly earned between \$200 and \$450 million dollars from the venture, a significant proportion of the regime's total income.

So that's what European pressure on Burma looks like. Sadly, Asian efforts leave even more to be desired. Under the guise of the euphemistically termed "constructive engagement," Burma's neighbors admitted the pariah state into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – facilitating huge increases in foreign investment. Since Burma switched to an "open economy" in 1988, trade between Burma and its neighbors has



mushroomed. Some \$7 billion dollars have been invested, almost half of it from ASEAN countries.

As a result, Burma's leaders have little to fear from a Western-led embargo. In an interview with the BBC in 2003, Burmese Ambassador to the UK, Kyaw Win, plainly noted that "We are not worried about US and European sanctions as trade with India, China and Thailand is already good."

Aside from the money to be made, Burma's regional neighbors are also focussed on bringing the long-isolated state into their sphere of influence. This affords the generals further leverage in resisting pressure directed at them by the US and the EU.

For China and India in particular, Burma is strategically vital. Beijing has long had a tangible influence over the generals and since 1998 has supplied more than \$1.6 million in arms and made significant contributions to Burma's infrastructure.

India is wary of allowing its Western flank to come under Chinese influence, so it doesn't bother the Burmese generals about their democratic failures. To counteract China's influence, India has funded infrastructure projects of its own and developed significant trade deals with Burma, further eroding the efforts of the US and others.

All the existing empirical studies on the use of sanctions conclude that they lead to major concessions on the part of the target state only in a minority of cases. Burma is clearly not one of those. As is so often the case, geo-political rivalries and lust for the economic spoils of a nation on its knees are ultimately more important to Burma's neighbors than the continual suffering of the Burmese people. The international community has to change this outlook.

If they are to have any effect, sanctions need to be part of a wider international campaign to bring about lasting change in Burma. The US must apply greater diplomatic pressure on those nations who continue to do business with the Burmese government, whilst maintaining its own embargo. George Bush's call for ASEAN to "get tough" with the junta is a start. For its part, ASEAN is becoming increasingly exasperated by the junta's behavior, in particular its lack of communication over the bizarre movement of the capital to the remote forest location of Pyinmana. It is sending a delegation to Rangoon to examine the progress toward democracy and should take the opportunity to set clear time lines for progress.

A multifaceted, multilateral approach must be

maintained to free the Burmese people. Piecemeal efforts will not do the trick.

*Matthew McAteer is on staff at Burma Issues, a Thailand-based NGO that supports grassroots empowerment projects for displaced Burmese. Find out more at [www.burmaissues.org](http://www.burmaissues.org)*

## PALESTINE

➡ NEVERMIND WHAT THE TRAVEL ADVISORIES say, Palestine is a great place to visit. You can take in historical sites with immense religious value, millennia-old cities, a dramatic landscape, and . . . oh yeah, show solidarity with a national self-determination movement. Problem is, you have to pass through the security apparatus of a foreign occupier to get in. So you'd better plan your approach carefully.

This past November, Israel gave control of the Gaza-Egypt border over to the Palestinian Authority. It's a nice gesture, but the fact remains that entry into the West Bank – where the majority of Palestinians live – is still controlled by Israel. Currently, most visitors find that, though not ideal, it's usually simplest to try and get to the West Bank by flying into Israel's Ben Gurion airport, as opposed to coming overland through Jordan. Still, even before you've stepped off the plane, security officials are waiting on the tarmac to zero in on "undesirables" and start questioning them immediately. Once you've passed through that gauntlet, the real interrogation begins inside the terminal. If the first questioner doesn't like your story, they'll call in their superior, who will treat you to an aggressive line of inquiry. Why are you here? Who will you be meeting with? Give us names. Predictably, they will be unimpressed by your responses, and you'll be directed to the next level in the chain of command. Again you'll be asked the same questions. The process takes hours. Often they'll meticulously sort through all your belongings, and subject you to a full pat-down body search in your own private room. And so it goes, until someone finally makes a decision about whether you're in or out. In this circumstance, it's generally a good idea to avoid using the words "Palestinian" and "solidarity" in the same sentence. But even with such precautions, visitors are regularly turned away at Ben Gurion if the security officials don't like their





TRAVELLERS CHECKING IN AT GAZA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

story. In fact, entire plane loads of people have been rejected. If you're worried about that potentiality, it's best to go through Jordan so that if you are denied entry, at least you can stay in the region and see some sites instead of sitting in an airport detention facility waiting to be put on the next plane back to Europe or North America.

Leaving isn't any better. You'd think Israeli authorities would be glad to get rid of you, but instead, as soon as they find out you've stepped foot in a Palestinian area you immediately become *persona non grata*. Some visitors hope to avoid talking about their time in Palestine, so that they can leave quietly. But the interrogators are good at what they do, so others hoping to get the fuss out of the way approach the security check-in with the equivalent of their hands in the air, proclaiming something to the effect of "I've been in Palestine. Give me the shake down and get this over with."

Some take in all in stride and relish the opportunity to spar a bit with the officials. Some are mockingly

gratified by the experience: "Little ol' me, a threat to your national security? I'm flattered." Others become flustered. Like the visitor who misheard the guard's query if she was a "tourist" and nervously responded that no, she was most certainly not a terrorist. Others find the whole process infuriating. When human rights activist Nicole Fransen was interrogated trying to board a flight out of Ben Gurion airport, she "was so furious that I began to shake. It's like, so what if I just spent three weeks in Palestine? Give me one good reason why I shouldn't visit with Palestinian shepherds who are being beaten up by your compatriots."

Of course, Israeli officials have the right to deny entry into their country to whomever they want for whatever reason they choose. But keeping people out of Palestine is an entirely different matter, given that Israelis have no legal or moral grounds to serve as Palestine's gatekeeper. What's more, the efforts of nonviolent Palestinian activists are bolstered by support from international observers. So it's hypocritical for the Israeli government to demand that Palestinians use nonviolent means to pursue their cause, and then continuously throw up obstacles to such work.

If the Israeli border shake down is something you'd like to experience first hand, check out the Israeli Solidarity Movement <[palsolidarity.org](http://palsolidarity.org)>, Christian Peacemaker Teams <[cpt.org](http://cpt.org)>, Global Exchange <[globalexchange.org](http://globalexchange.org)>, Operation Dove (Italy) <[www.operazionecolomba.org](http://www.operazionecolomba.org)> or Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente (France) <[www.interventioncivile.org](http://www.interventioncivile.org)>.

*Ben Landis*

## POINT

Ziauddin Sardar in the *New Statesman*

In Palestine there is now a thriving culture of celebrating suicide bombers as "martyrs," expressed most extensively as poster art. Posters plastered all over Gaza and the West Bank depict suicide bombers in heroic modes. This culture is embraced by people who ought to know better. . . .

The only way to [address] such incongruity is to stand up unambiguously against all suicide bombings everywhere – in Palestine as elsewhere. And to denounce, loudly and clearly, the vile culture of martyrdom. Suicide bombers are not heroes but murderers, pure and simple.

## COUNTERPOINT

Ted Honderich in *After the Terror*

I myself have no serious doubt . . . that the Palestinians have exercised a moral right in their terrorism as certain as was the moral right, say, of the African people of South Africa against their white captors and the apartheid state. Those Palestinians who have resorted to necessary killing have been right to try to free their people, and those who have killed themselves in the cause of their people have indeed sanctified themselves. This seems to me a terrible truth, a truth that overcomes what we must remember about all terrorism, and also overcomes the thought of hideousness and monstrosity.





## PORTRAIT OF A PATRIOT.

What is Lockheed Martin selling with this ad? Military hardware, or the ecstasy of empire? President Eisenhower warned us about the risk of collusion between military and industry. But we didn't listen. And now it's getting totally out of hand.

**His job: defend freedom.**

**His challenge: be ready for anything, anywhere, any time.**

When you meet the men and women who serve America in the military and government, you find the strength and character of this nation. You find courage, commitment and the enduring belief that the best thing of all is what matters most. Freedom.

The Economist, "The World in 2006"

**LOCKHEED MARTIN**  
*We never forget who we're working for™*





## ISRAELI INTERESTS ARE DETERMINING US FOREIGN POLICY *say Kathleen and Bill Christison*



THE NEOCONSERVATIVE ARCHITECTS of the war in Iraq have become conspicuously absent of late. Now that US politicians and commentators are belatedly noticing the war going sour, neocons are disinclined to draw attention to their role in the messy foreign entanglement. When they do make appearances, they frantically scramble to delink themselves from the war and, in particular, any notion that pre-war planning was partially informed by how it would benefit Israel.



Yet it's clear that Israel did factor into the neocons' push for war with Iraq and that they do possess a particular dedication to Israeli interests. And this reality raises the question whether there is any distance between the Bush administration's policy and that of Israel, and whether the principal administration proponents of an Israel-first strategy, are exclusively loyal to the US or to Israel. In an unusually frank acknowledgement, National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley recently emphasized at an annual meeting of the major pro-Israeli lobby organization American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) that the US fight in Iraq is an "effort to spread freedom throughout the Muslim world [that] will leave both the United States, and Israel, safer and more secure."

The US tilt toward Israel is a long-established foreign policy phenomenon. Still, for most of the twentieth century, this tilt was tempered by the so-called "Arabists" in the State Department – who had

a personal history and an educational background in the Arab world and were accused by supporters of Israel of being totally biased toward Arab interests. While they had only limited power in the higher policymaking circles of any given administration, they did manage to help maintain some semblance of US balance. But in the early 1990s they began to be replaced by their opposites – dubbed wryly by some as "Israelists" – and the pretense of exhibiting balance between Israeli and Arab, particularly Palestinian, interests is gone. The change has been so dramatic during the last decade and a half that it is no exaggeration to say that Middle East policy has fallen into the hands of a group of Israeli loyalists. During the Clinton administration, the two most senior officials dealing with the Palestinian-Israeli peace process were partisans of Israel, having worked as activists and scholars at pro-Israeli lobby organizations and think tanks before their government tenure.

But since 2001, the link between active promoters of Israeli interests and policymaking circles has become stronger than ever before. The neocons who pepper the Bush administration have long records of activism in the US on behalf of Israel and of policy advocacy in Israel. The only reasonable term for this phenomenon is "dual loyalties," meaning the dual allegiance of those several officials at high and middle levels who cannot distinguish US from Israeli interests, who openly promote the supposed identity of interests between the two, and who spent their early careers lobbying in the US on behalf of Israel or giving policy advice to Israeli governments.

The term "dual loyalties" has long been one of those red flags posted around the subject of Israel,



because of its implication of Jewish disloyalty to the United States and because it recalls old anti-Semitic canards accusing Jews of using their power or wealth to serve some master other than the state in which they lived. But it's hardly revolutionary to suggest that Jews have a particular affinity for Israel, and that *some* of them might want the US to make an extra effort to protect their spiritual homeland. Writing in *The Nation*, Eric Alterman noted "My own dual loyalties – there, I admitted it – were drilled into me by my parents, my grandparents, my Hebrew school teachers and my rabbis, not to mention Israeli teen-tour leaders and AIPAC college representatives. It was just about the only thing they all agreed upon."

But the important issue here is the nature of the US relationship with another sovereign state, not the ethnic or religious identity of those who shape the relationship. Few would have difficulty applying the term dual loyalties to Palestinians who worked actively in pro-Palestinian lobby organizations and then entered government service and began promoting Palestinian interests.

It is vitally important therefore to examine how *some* Jews who hold government office are using their positions, and to ponder the question of whose interests Bush administration policy is meant to serve.

Some of the leading neocons who pressed for the invasion of Iraq and helped plan it – Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith, Vice Presidential chief-of-staff and national security adviser Lewis "Scooter" Libby, and chairman of the quasi-governmental Defense Policy Board Richard Perle – have left US government service over the last two years. But if these four are now gone from the highest policymaking councils of the administration, they are not forgotten. The imperial strategy they helped plan and implement remains in place, the dramatically enhanced ties with Israel and the identity of US and Israeli interests that they advocated remain as well, and several of the most strident neocon advocates of Israel remain in critical positions in the Bush administration.

Although the neocons' network might appear on the surface to have less clout, in the early days of the Bush administration a major *institutionalization* of the US-Israeli alliance occurred through the unprecedented cementing of ties between the two

countries. A series of joint committees has created a smoothly functioning policymaking apparatus that essentially regards US interests in the Middle East as identical to Israel's and no longer depends on particular individuals for its perpetuation. The neocon conglomerate has grown throughout the Bush years into an interconnected system, inside and outside government, made up of unabashed global hawks and Israeli loyalists, that has gained and maintains a virtual lock on the formulation and implementation of foreign policy.

This new system is particularly entrenched in the military procurement and high-tech research areas, where new joint projects involving the two nations' military-industrial complexes appear quite regularly. In both countries, corporate lobbying efforts work to strengthen these ties between arms manufacturers.

The neocons themselves may not know how much of their passion for advancing the US imperium is driven by an America-first impulse and how much by a focus on securing Israel's predominance in the Middle East with US help. Either way, the difference is unimportant.

An examination of the cast of characters in policymaking circles, retired and still active, reveals a pervasive network of pro-Israeli activists who have been working together, in and out of various administrations, for over a quarter century. All have common conservative intellectual and political progenitors, and most have participated together for decades in composing policy papers and creating think tanks. Their most publicized effort before coming to power in the Bush administration was as members of the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), which sent an open letter to President Clinton in 1998 urging military action against Iraq, for the "security of the world" and the "safety of . . . our friends and allies like Israel . . ." The PNAC letter is only part of the neocons' long paper trail, most of it giving clear evidence of their fervently right-wing pro-Israeli, and fervently anti-Palestinian, sentiments. Israel comes up constantly as a neocon reference point, always mentioned with the US as the beneficiary of a recommended policy, always linked with the US when national interests are at issue.

These writings are dotted with concepts like "redefining Iraq," "redrawing the map of the Middle East," "nurturing alternatives to [Yasser] Arafat," abandonment of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, regime change in Syria – all of



which were initially laid out in neocon policy papers as important strategic goals for Israel and quickly became familiar parts of the Bush administration's diplomatic planning. The enthusiasm with which senior administration officials like Bush himself, Vice President Dick Cheney, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld adopted strategic themes originally defined for Israel's guidance testifies to the persuasiveness of a neocon philosophy focused narrowly on Israel, as well as to the pervasiveness of the neocon network throughout policymaking councils.

Beneath cabinet level, the list of pro-Israeli neocons who served as policy functionaries in the early Bush years, who still sit in critical policy positions, or who advise policymakers from the edges of government, is quite lengthy. Wolfowitz and Perle, although now gone, made certain that like-minded colleagues staffed the working levels of the Defense Department, recruiting Middle East desk officers and supervisors from the right-wing, pro-Israeli think tanks that dot the Washington landscape. Wolfowitz, himself an early Perle protégé, is Libby's mentor and former teacher. Douglas Feith was a Perle protégé and has worked closely with Perle over the years, including co-authoring strategy papers for a right-wing Israeli government. At various times in their earlier careers, Wolfowitz, Perle and Feith all came under investigation for possibly passing classified information to Israel, and Feith has been questioned in a currently running spy case involving AIPAC, one of the most powerful lobby groups in Washington. All of the earlier investigations were dropped.

Some of the "experts" appointed by Wolfowitz, Feith and Perle came from the pro-Israeli Washington Institute for Near East Policy; others came from the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), a think tank / website founded and run by retired Israeli intelligence officers that circulates selective and sometimes distorted translations from Arab media highlighting only the most extreme of statements – and ignoring moderate Arab commentary and extremist Hebrew statements. These lower-level

staffers remain in place even with the departure of the senior neocons from the Pentagon.

In the Vice President's office, Cheney established his own personal national security staff, run by Libby and other aides active on Israel's behalf. Former deputy director of the staff John Hannah has taken over as director now that Libby has been driven out by an indictment in connection with alleged Bush administration lies in the run-up to the war in Iraq. Hannah was plucked from the pro-Israeli Washington Institute. Cheney's Middle East adviser is David Wurmser, one of the most prolific of the neocon strategists and a man who is particularly hawkish on Syria. In 1996, Wurmser co-authored with Feith and Perle a policy paper for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that promoted regime change in Iraq and Syria for the dual benefit of Israel

and the US. It also urged Israel to make a "clean break" from the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, which the authors regarded as a prescription for Israel's annihilation. Another co-author was Wurmser's wife, Meyrav, an Israeli who co-founded MEMRI.

The director of Middle East affairs on the National Security Council is Elliott Abrams, who came to prominence after pleading guilty to withholding

information from Congress during the Iran-contra scandal – and was pardoned by President Bush the elder. Abrams is the son-in-law of one of the original neocons, Norman Podhoretz, and has long been a vocal proponent of the Israeli right and a critic of any Palestinian-Israeli peace process requiring territorial concessions by Israel. He has frequently advanced the position that US and Israeli interests are identical. Putting him in a critical policymaking position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is like entrusting the henhouse to a fox.

Pro-Israeli activists on the sidelines of government reinforce the neocons inside. William Kristol, son of neocon originals Irving Kristol and Gertrude Himmelfarb, is closely linked to the administration's pro-Israel coterie and serves as their cheerleader through the Rupert Murdoch-owned magazine that he edits, *The Weekly Standard*. Frank Gaffney

With the exception of a few radicals, North American commentators studiously avoid the issue of the neocons' attachment to Israel and the possibility that the Iraq war was conceived in great measure for the benefit of Israel.



– another Jackson and Perle protégé and Reagan administration defense official – puts his pro-Israel oar in from his think tank, the Center for Security Policy, and through frequent media appearances and regular columns in the *The Washington Times*.

Gaffney's is one of myriad think tanks that provide pro-Israeli policy support to the administration. The incestuous nature of these establishments, whose membership lists are virtually interchangeable, is insidious. Several scholars and board members at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), including former Reagan administration UN ambassador and vocal Israeli supporter Jeane Kirkpatrick, are longtime neocons and occupy positions on other boards as well. Shortly before the Iraq invasion in March 2003, Bush himself publicly hailed the AEI for sending several of its scholars to positions in his administration.

One of the most influential organizations is the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA). Formed after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war specifically to bring Israel's security concerns to the attention of US policymakers, the extremely hawkish, right-wing JINSA has always had a high-powered board able to place its members inside conservative US

administrations. Cheney, Feith and John Bolton – the angry hawk who serves as US ambassador to the UN – were JINSA members until they entered the Bush administration. Perle is still a member, as are Kirkpatrick, former CIA director and leading Iraq-war hawk James Woolsey, and old-time rabid pro-Israel types like Eugene Rostow and Michael Ledeen. Both JINSA and Gaffney's Center for Security Policy are heavily underwritten by Irving Moskowitz, a right-wing American Zionist, California business magnate (his money comes from bingo parlors), and JINSA board member who has lavishly financed the establishment of several religious settlements in Arab East Jerusalem.

The grand titan of the pro-Israel lobby is the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) – and its affiliated think tank, the Washington Institute. AIPAC remains particularly active despite a spy scandal involving two of its employees, since

fired, who are charged with passing on to the Israeli embassy classified information regarding Iran given to them by a Pentagon analyst in 2004. The spy scandal appears not to have chastened AIPAC, nor induced it to back off from open promotion of Israeli interests in Washington, nor damaged its ties to sympathetic administration officials.

All of these efforts show that the neocons involved in the formulation of the main body of Bush administration policy in the Middle East share a primary goal of advancing Israel's interests and a belief that those interests coincide exactly with US interests. And it is absurd to suggest that zealous advocacy of another country's interests does not amount to loyalty to that country.

With the exception of a few radicals, North American commentators studiously avoid the issue of the neocons' attachment to Israel and the possibility

that the Iraq war was conceived in great measure for the benefit of Israel. Jewish commentators argue vigorously against any notion of a link between Israel and the war. Most who address the issue at all point to the fact that Cheney and Rumsfeld are not Jewish as supposed evidence that the role of Jewish neocons in shaping policy is minimal. But the history of the US-Israeli relationship and

Loyalty to Israel by most members of Congress, as well as by government officials, has grown so powerful that neither major US political party is willing to work toward changing the situation.

of lobbying efforts on behalf of Israel demonstrates clearly that Jewish influence on non-Jewish politicians has usually been critical in determining the Middle East positions of those politicians, including presidents from Harry Truman through Lyndon Johnson to George Bush the younger. The neocons have been working together with officials like Cheney and Rumsfeld for decades, and given the extensive network they have established throughout government, their influence on senior policymakers cannot possibly be discounted.

George Washington warned two centuries ago against a "passionate attachment" to any country for fear it could create the illusion of a common interest where none may exist. Zealotry in any cause has no place in foreign policy formulation; it clouds judgment and can lead to extreme actions to sustain policies. One example of this was Douglas Feith's creation of the Office of Special Plans inside



the Defense Department to gather – and often manufacture – intelligence to justify invading Iraq. Zealotry produces blindness. The zealous effort to pursue Israel's right-wing agenda has blinded the dual loyalists in the administration and all whom they have influenced to the true face of Israel as occupier, to any concern for justice or equity, and to adequate consideration of interests other than Israel's. Indeed, this continual unquestioning accommodation of Israel, far from bringing an end to violence, is leading to its tragic escalation and to increased terrorism against both the United States and all its allies, including Israel.

Most pernicious of all, this loyalty to Israel by most members of Congress, as well as by government officials, has grown so powerful that neither major US political party is willing to work toward changing the situation.

What does it matter, in the end, if certain individuals in government split their loyalties

between the United States and Israel? Apart from the evidence of the policy distortions that arise from zealotry, one need only ask whether it can be mere coincidence that those in the Bush administration who most strongly promoted "regime change" in Iraq were also those who most strongly support the policies of the Israeli right wing. And would it bother most Americans to know that the United States went to war against Iraq at least in part for the benefit of Israel?

*Kathleen Christison is a former CIA political analyst and has worked on Middle East issues for 30 years. She is the author of Perceptions of Palestine and The Wound of Dispossession. Bill Christison was a senior official at the CIA. He served as a National Intelligence Officer and as Director of the CIA's Office of Regional and Political Analysis. They can be reached at Kathy.Bill@Christison-SantaFe.com.*

## WHY WE FIGHT

Why do Americans fight? What are the forces – political, economic, ideological – that drive them to wage war against an ever-changing enemy? Why do they have 725 military bases in 130 foreign countries?

Eugene Jarecki – director of "The Trials of Henry Kissinger" – explores these question in his latest documentary "Why we Fight." The title is plucked from World War II-era US government propaganda films bearing the same name. Jarecki turns the premise on its head, however, critically surveying the scorched landscape of a half-century's military adventures.

He sets the scene with clips from President Dwight Eisenhower's 1961 Farewell Address to the Nation – in which the former soldier famously cautioned Americans to "guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex."

Interviews range from average Janes at a county fair to presidential aspirant John McCain. Other voices include

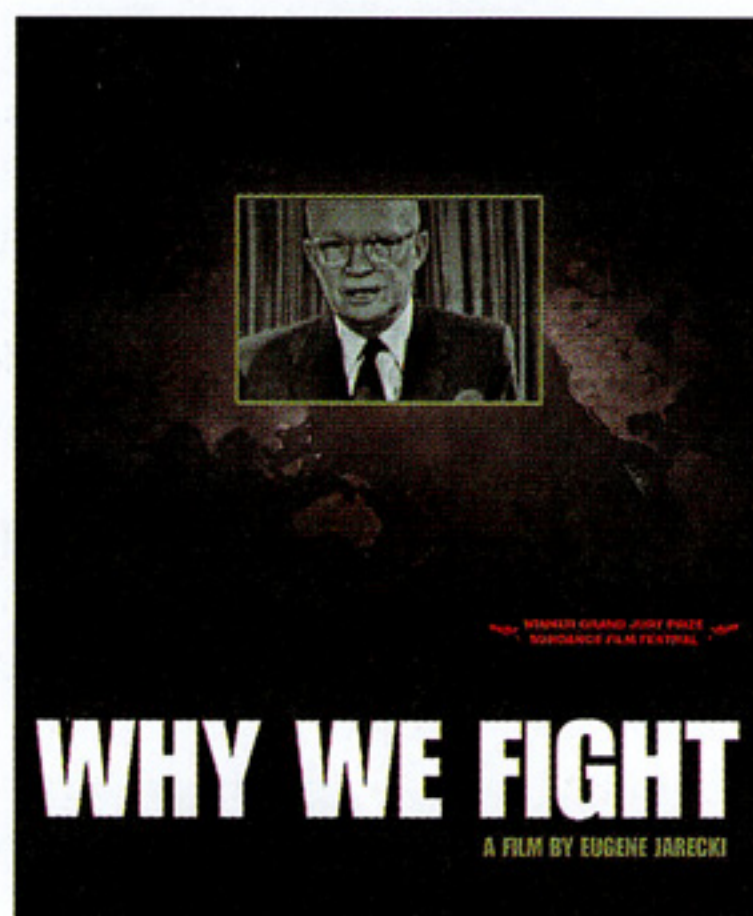
neocon heavyweights like Richard Perle and William Kristol, Gore Vidal, a retired police officer whose son died in the 9/11 attacks, Eisenhower's son and granddaughter, military historian

Gwynne Dyer, the pilots who were proud to drop the first bombs in Operation Iraqi Freedom, disillusioned former Pentagon staffer Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkowski, and Anh Duong, a refugee from the Vietnam War who made a new life for herself in the US by working in the arms industry – and helped develop the "thermobaric" bunker busters used against targets in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Jarecki hammers home the point that Eisenhower's warning has gone unheeded. The collusion between industry, the Pentagon and Congress has become so entrenched, most Americans don't give it a second thought. Political scientist Chalmers Johnson puts it plainly

in the film: "The defense budget is \$750,000,000,000. Profits went up last year well over 25 percent. When war becomes that profitable, you're going to see more of it."

To find showtimes in your area, visit [www.whywefight.com](http://www.whywefight.com).







KIMCHI POWER





SUNNY MOK/EYEPRESS NEWS

North American activism endured a slow and painful decline in the years after the Battle of Seattle. Today, non-Western activists like this South Korean protester at December 2005 WTO protests in Hong Kong represent the vanguard of global revolution.



ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2003, SOME 150 South Koreans were trying to pull down a security barrier separating them and 10,000 other protesters from World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiators in Cancun, Mexico. While the barrier heaved and flags burned, Lee Kyoung Hae – a farmer whose land had been repossessed by the bank – scrambled to the top of the fence, turned to the rest of the group and proclaimed, “Don’t worry about me, just struggle your hardest.” He then plunged a knife into his chest, rupturing the left atrium of his heart. He died that evening.

While Lee’s protest was radical even by his compatriots’ standards, it was indicative of just how passionate he and other South Korean farmers are about opposing WTO policies.

And two years on, his death remains a powerful symbol for the motley crew of antiglobalization activists demanding more input into global free-trade negotiations.

Thanks to the actions of Lee and others, Koreans have emerged as the face of a movement that many Western observers long-associated with black-clad youth from their own communities. At recent WTO meetings in Hong Kong, one group of Korean farmers jumped into Victoria Harbor wearing life jackets, bobbing up and down while being showered with pepper spray. Another group took a more Buddhist approach, marching down a street in rows of five, repeatedly taking three steps, then kneeling down and touching their foreheads to the ground. A loud drum beat accompanied chants of “Down, down WTO.”

These public actions have captured the public’s imagination, drawing attention to the human face – rather than the abstruse details – of unjust trade policies. In combination with sophisticated behind-



SOUTH KOREAN FARMERS CLASH WITH RIOT POLICE DURING A PROTEST IN SEOUL AFTER THE FUNERAL OF LEE KYOUNG HAE, SEPTEMBER 20, 2003.

the-scenes lobbying by activists and NGOs, they play an important role in influencing the course of trade discussions.

And they come at a time when South Korea is also gathering steam as a cultural force. The country, once looked down upon by Japan and China as a colonial outpost, has let loose a “Korean wave” of cultural exports, from television shows, hip-hop groups and soccer stars. Television viewers from Malaysia to Mongolia have been enthralled by shows like “A Jewel in the Palace,” a story about a royal cook who rises to become the king’s physician. When the show ran in Hong Kong, 50 percent of residents tuned in. In Taiwan, it is being used to advertise South Korea on the Taipei subway.

All of this is far removed from the struggles of men like Lee Kyoung Hae, but it suggests a substantive link between cultural vibrancy and dynamic activism. When a society is confident in its cultural identity, it can take on the world.

*Ben Landis*



## A PEACEFUL ARMY

Envision this: an army of professional activists deployed into conflict zones with the express mission of documenting human rights abuses and using proven techniques aimed at ending violence. Like soldiers, they are armed – not with phosphorus shells or attack helicopters, but with cameras (turns out no one wants to be recorded committing crimes against humanity). And like soldiers, they believe that some things are worth dying for.

The kidnapping of four nonviolent activists in Iraq this November revealed that the prototype for such a “peace army” already exists. The Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) has a stated policy of limiting violence by “Getting in the Way.” If others are willing to risk their lives for the sake of war, they believe that they, as pacifists, should take some risks for peace. Over the past two decades they have done just that in global hotspots such as Colombia, Chiapas, Afghanistan, the Occupied Territories, North American native reserves and Iraq.

Engaged in “guerilla journalism” at a time when the deteriorating security situation keeps most western journalists holed up in the Green Zone, CPTers were systematically documenting the torture of Iraqi prisoners months before investigative journalist Seymour Hersh broke the story of Abu Ghraib. Hersh has called their work “cutting edge.” The outpouring of support for the hostages from across the

Muslim world illustrates the moral power of their work in bridging cultural chasms and proving that not every Westerner has a gun pointed at a Muslim head.

CPT and like-minded NGOs such as Peace Brigades International and the Nonviolent Peace Force are at the forefront of a new challenge for anti-war activists who have had enough of what British hostage Norman Kember called “cheap peacemaking.” Their goal? A nonviolent army that has stopped marching for peace, and started making it happen.

*Deborah Campbell*

Christian Peacemaker Teams distributed a questionnaire to inmates released from Iraqi prisons, asking them to check ‘yes’ or ‘no’ after each question. Excerpt from testimony of Mohammed Kamel Yahya, age 39:

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Stripped of your clothing (nude)? | No  |
| Beaten by hand (punches)?         | Yes |
| Beaten by stick or rod?           | Yes |
| Beaten by cables, wires or belts? | No  |
| Held at gunpoint?                 | Yes |
| Hooded?                           | Yes |
| Had cold water poured on you?     | Yes |

Hello *Adbusters*,

My name is Daniel Lofredo Rota, and my life has changed after this weekend. On Friday night, in a spontaneous outburst of adventure, my roommate Jon and I joined Nova, a man of the Earth, on a trip to visit Spooner, a *Sequoia sempervirens* (Redwood) in California’s Nanning Creek Watershed, an old-growth forest that has been approved for clear-cutting. After an extremely demanding and intense climb, we reached the tree sitters platform. Soon, in perfect synchrony with the sunrise, I fell asleep, 150 feet above the ground

on an amazingly imposing, 2000 year old tree. A few hours later, I was awoken by the sound of the first chainsaws mauling the old growth, fueling the relentless advance of the Pacific Lumber Company. Thirty minutes later, I heard the crack and thunderous plummet of the first tree of the day. Soon, the roar of a helicopter could be heard in the distance, and the fallen tree was dragged unceremoniously away.

After spending 30 hours atop of this glorious tree, I feel that it is my mission, and the mission of all those who care for the environment, to give everything

we can give to the front lines of this nonviolent struggle against the vicious machinery of greed that lives in Scotia, California.

Please help spread the word so that this project gains the strength necessary to succeed. Go to [www.wesavetrees.org](http://www.wesavetrees.org).

This is true grassroots; this is true activism.

In The Big Ideas of 2006, you mentioned the curveball of the year: two environmental activists declaring that environmentalism needs to die. Maybe this is a viable alternative: ACTION!

DANIEL LOFREDO-ROTA  
*Arcata, USA*



## THE EVOLUTION OF BUY NOTHING DAY

THIRTEEN YEARS AGO, BUY NOTHING DAY WAS BORN from the same west-coast Canadian environmentalism that that launched Greenpeace and pitched hippies against loggers, dinghies against whaling ships: the realization that over-consumption is the mother of all our environmental woes.

A few years later, people began to discover the flip side of the coin: that our unsustainable consumption was fed by the 3,000 daily marketing messages drip-fed into our subconsciousness by the corporate mass media. Mental environmentalists, media activists and tree-huggers joined forces and BND blossomed.

Most recently, in the wake of several horrific acts of international terrorism, BND underwent its most radical transformation – forging a harder geopolitical edge – as a new band of strategists began to raise fears about what rabid over-consumption was doing to our very chances of survival. Could the hatred that fuelled 9/11 have anything to do with the staggering inequalities between the world's rich and poor? Was over-consumption one of the root causes of terror? They thought so, and as this year's highlights show, BND has become a political firebrand.



CRITICAL MASS ON BUY NOTHING DAY, CHICAGO, USA

Here in Providence, Rhode Island we started the day out in front of a mall. Bad Santa smoked cigars, looked bloated and swung his whip around, yelling at shoppers to hurry up and get in the mall because the war wasn't going to pay for itself. Santa also had a little sweatshop elf running around passing out flyers, but the sweatshop elf never seemed to work fast enough! We also had two Nothing Salesman running around handing out what we said were coupons, and that everything in the mall was free as long as they had one.

ANONYMOUS

I spent this Buy Nothing Day in Afghanistan. I didn't buy anything, but I doubt my actions were as important as all those Stateside participants. It's high time that America woke up and threw off the chains of our corporate masters. Advertising has watered down everything: Art, Film, Music, etc., but I say WAKE UP! Look around for things of exceptional quality and you'll find that they rarely coincide with mainstream images of what is "quality." Just some thoughts from a soldier.

SSG RONALD E. DAHLGREN  
*US Army*



Hi guys,

Just thought you might like to know how Buy Nothing Day went in Bristol, UK.

We held our Buy Nothing Day event in the middle of Broadmead, the biggest shopping center in the city. Despite the freezing weather we had a massive turnout. We gave away free food and cups of tea. We had a kids' area, with masses of sofa cushions and rugs, where kids could have their hair braided and their faces painted, or just play giant Snakes and Ladders. We had a free shop which was a massive success – people donated books, computer games, clothes and even a TV, and members of the public browsed, donated and took what they wanted.

We subverted the cheery sounds of a brass band by singing anti-consumerist lyrics over traditional Christmas carols. It was such a success that we ended up with a group of 30 singers wandering around indoor shopping centers, singing, distributing leaflets and (eventually) getting ejected by security.

Thank you for all the ideas and inspiration.

BEN WATSON  
*Bristol, UK*



BUY NOTHING DAY IN TOKYO, JAPAN



REVEREND BILLY AND THE STOP SHOPPING GOSPEL CHOIR ON THE BUY NOTHING DAY IN NEW YORK, USA

There is a new anti-consumerism website that is currently in beta. It is called BorrowMe ([www.borrowme.com](http://www.borrowme.com)) and it allows you to borrow, lend, swap and track anything (that you are borrowing from someone, or that someone is borrowing from you). An easier way to understand what BorrowMe is all about is to think of it as “the product-lending library for the world.” Their motto is “bye bye to buying.”

GENNY BOURDAGES  
*Chilliwack, Canada*



## PARADIGM SHIFT

### THE SECRET TO BEING AS RADICAL AS WE WANT TO BE — AND AS RADICAL AS WE NEED TO BE — IS TO FINANCE THE REVOLUTION OURSELVES

*say Michael Shuman and Merrian Fuller*



IF MOHANDAS GANDHI WERE A typical North American activist these days, he would probably be wearing a three-piece suit and working in a plush office with his law degree prominently displayed. He would have little time to lead protests, since every other week would be spent meeting with donors — and those power lunches would hardly go well with fasting. He would be careful to avoid salt marches or cotton boycotts, so as not to offend key donors. To sharpen his annual pitch to foundations, he would be constantly

dreaming up new one-year projects on narrowly focused topics, perhaps a one-time conference on English human-rights abuses, or a documentary on anti-colonial activities in New Delhi. To ensure that various allies didn't steal away core funders, he would keep his distance and be inclined to trash talk behind their backs. In short, there's little doubt that the British would still be running India.

The problem with activism today is that it is largely funded by grants and gifts from rich foundations and individuals. The long-standing assumption that you can take the money with few strings attached, and then run, needs to be fundamentally reexamined.

Building a philanthropic base of support can cripple an organization's mission and wreck it altogether when the well runs dry. Most nonprofits have engaged in a kind of fundraising arms race in which our best leaders focus more time, energy and resources, not on changing the world, but on improving their panhandling prowess to capture just a little more of a philanthropic pie that actually expands very little from year to year. Armies of "development" staff spend as much as a third of an organization's resources, not to advance the poor, but to cultivate wealthy donors. Significant numbers of our colleagues create campaigns, direct-mail

pitches, telemarketing scripts, newsletters and other products exclusively to "care and feed" prospects and to frame positions that will not offend the rich.

Nonprofit structures dictated by this mode of funding also burden organizers with the heavy regulatory hand of the state. To qualify for tax-deductible contributions, for example, US nonprofits must agree to limit lobbying and not to campaign for political causes of candidates.

We believe it's time for North American progressives to break free from the philanthropic plantation. Those of us serious about social change increasingly must get down to business, figuratively and literally. Every social change group may not be able to generate all its funding through revenue-generation, but every nonprofit certainly can generate a greater percentage than it is doing now. In other words, we should become our own funders. Once we start generating our own resources, we can invest them politically — as corporations do now — largely without limitation, without wasting our time on fundraising appeals, without worrying about that next grant, without apologies.

To get a sense of the possibilities, check out Cabbages & Condoms, a popular restaurant in Bangkok. As your senses become intoxicated by the aromas of garlic, ginger, basil, galangal and lemongrass, you cannot avoid noticing the origins of the name. On top of each heavy wooden table is a slab of glass, under which are neatly arranged rows of colorful prophylactics. Posters and paintings adorn the half-dozen large rooms, all communicating the restaurant's central message: the AIDS epidemic afflicting Thailand can be checked only through the unabashed promotion and use of male contraception. With balloon animals made from carefully inflated and twisted condoms and the after-dinner candies replaced with your own take-home "condom-mints," even teens cannot escape the message prominently framed on the wall: "Sex is fun but don't be stupid — use protection."

What makes the five "C&C" restaurants unique,



along with an affiliated beach-front resort and numerous gift shops, is that they are all owned by the Population and Community Development Association (PDA), a rural development organization that has been a leader in promoting family planning and fighting AIDS in Thailand. Seven out of every ten dollars spent by the PDA on such activities as free vasectomies and mobile health clinics are covered by the net revenues from its 16 subsidiary for-profits. Were the PDA dependent on funding from the Thai government, the World Bank or even the Rockefeller Foundation, it no doubt would be told to tone down the message. Jokes on its website – like “the Cabbages and Condoms Restaurants in Thailand don’t only present excellent Thai food, the food is guaranteed not to get you pregnant” – would certainly be discouraged.

The cash flow gives the PDA a measure of confidence and boldness. The founder, Mechai Viravaidya, has no qualms about his decision to employ for-profits: “Unlimited demand is chasing limited supply [of charitable donations]. No longer are gifts, grants or begging enough. From day one, thirty years ago, we have been acutely aware of sustainability and cost-recovery.”

Consider some US examples of social entrepreneurship:

- Housing Works in New York uses its Used Book Café to generate more than \$2 million annually for its work, which prioritizes advocacy for homeless people with HIV. The organization runs clinics, conducts public policy research, lobbies federal and state officials, even leads sit-ins. It is fearless, aggressive and stunningly effective – and its \$30 million of annual work would be impossible were it not for its vast range of real estate, food service, retail and rental companies that help pay the bills.
- Pioneer Human Services is a community development corporation based in Seattle that assists a wide range of at-risk populations, including the unemployed, the homeless, ex-convicts, alcoholics and addicts. The organization serves 6,500 people a year and generates nearly all its \$55 million budget through a web of ambitious subsidiary nonprofit businesses: cafes and a central kitchen facility for institutional customers, aerospace and sheet-metal industries, a construction company, food warehouses, a real-estate management group and consulting services for other nonprofits. Most of the jobs in

these businesses are awarded to its at-risk clients, allowing it to further its mission to integrate clients back into society.

- The Rocky Mountain Institute, a leading promoter of alternative energy technology in Snowmass, Colorado, created E-Source in 1986 to provide in-depth analysis of services, markets, and technologies relating to energy efficiency and renewable energy production. In 1992 RMI secured a program-related investment from the MacArthur Foundation to move the work into a for-profit subsidiary. By 1998 it was generating about \$400,000 for the parent nonprofit, but RMI decided it could do even better under new management, so it sold the company to Pearson plc in Britain for \$8 million. Today, RMI assists and benefits from other for-profit spinoffs, such as Hypercar, Inc., which aims to create a lightweight body architecture to improve the efficiency of the entire US automobile fleet.
- Judy Wicks’ White Dog Café in Philadelphia is as much a community organizing center as a restaurant. Radical speakers from around the country provide a steady stream of public lectures. An adjacent store sells fair trade products and will soon be introducing a line of locally made clothing. The White Dog itself embodies principles of social justice and environmental stewardship by paying all employees a living wage, insisting on humanely raised meats and eggs, using locally grown ingredients and running on wind electricity. Twenty percent of profits from the restaurant go to the White Dog Café Foundation, carrying on the café’s mission through nonprofit activities.

These examples embody many possible models. A for-profit subsidiary can generate money for a parent nonprofit. Or, better still, a for-profit can become the change it seeks, by producing and selling socially important goods and services.

While we reject the libertarian argument that every human problem has an economic solution, many social-change issues clearly have economic dimensions that are susceptible to creative business plans. Hate nuclear power? Launch energy-service companies to spread conservation measures, or build local wind farms to take control of your own electricity future. Concerned about the poor, minorities and women having equal access to credit? Create more community banks, credit unions and micro-enterprise funds. Troubled by pharmaceutical



prices that make life-saving drugs unattainable for impoverished people across the globe? Start, as several companies based in the developing world did, companies that mass-produce affordable generic versions of high-priced American drugs.

Socially responsible business should be not just a boutique sector of the private economy, but its mainstream. We have been impressed in recent years by the growing number of local businesspeople who not only “walk the walk” of social justice in the small details of their operations and products but also tout the virtues of local ownership. This third generation of entrepreneur-organizers is being led by groups like the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) and by the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA). Each promotes local ownership of business, champions social justice and neighborhood revitalization, and pushes for new public policies that remove the tilts in a playing field that favors badly behaved big business.

Sooner or later, the concepts of social-change organization and of social-responsibility business should become indistinguishable. Truly responsible businesses would be owned by all members of a community (rich and poor), hire locally, expand local skills, comport with local labor and environmental standards, produce goods and services that meet urgent local needs and become allies of social justice movements. What better way to help the poor than to transform them into the captains, worker-bees, shareholders and customers of community-friendly business?

If foundations and donors had never existed and professional panhandling had been outlawed, social-change groups would have been forced to turn to creating and running new enterprises or new

networks of local businesses, and our movement would be considerably healthier than it is today. Progressives have become the classic 20-something kid still living at home, expecting an allowance from deep-pocket parents for a few basic chores, while agreeing, as a condition for the chump change, to obey someone else's rules on social change. It's time to grow up and strike out on our own.

Here's a challenge to activists (one we take seriously ourselves): let's try to wean ourselves from the charity habit, say by three percent per year. Think about just one piece of your agenda that could be framed as a revenue generator, dream about it a little, develop a business plan and give it a try. If you lack the skills, skip your next fundraising class and instead attend one of thousands upon thousands of entrepreneurship programs around the world. Or hire someone who might start the entrepreneurial subsidiary of your nonprofit.

Gandhi understood that the key to freeing India was to transform his fellow citizens into economically productive agents by spinning their own cloth and taking their own salt from the sea. Martin Luther King Jr. implored African Americans to form their own credit unions and community development corporations. The secret to being as radical as we want to be – and as radical as we need to be – is to finance the revolution ourselves.

*Michael Shuman is the vice president for enterprise development for the Training and Development Corporation. Merrian Fuller is a managing director of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies. This article was adapted from “Profits for Justice,” which first appeared in The Nation.*



Conservation International is now the largest international conservation group, largely because of one grant. Almost \$280 million from the Gordon Moore Foundation – Gordon Moore being the founder of Intel – went to the creation of what is largely a conservation foundation.

And that is the largest single conservation grant ever given to a single organization.

To me, it's the most unimaginative philanthropy I can think of: to write to \$280 million dollar check to one organization. If I were able to sit down with Gordon Moore and say, “let me

try to make your philanthropy a little more imaginative,” I'd say, “okay, take \$280 million and designate it for conservation. You like Conservation International, give them \$140 million, half of it. Take the other \$140 million, divide it up into \$1 million lots. Use your staff – you've got an enormous staff at your foundation, send them out to find the 140 best, most effective, potentially effective, pioneering, energized environmental groups and give them each \$1 million.”

*Prize-winning investigative journalist Mark Dowie talking about how to revamp environmental philanthropy in the short film “Empowering the Grassroots.” View it at [www.grist.org](http://www.grist.org).*



# MEDIA, POLITICS AND THE NETWORK SOCIETY

Richard Hassan's *Media, Politics And The Network Society* (Open University Press, 2004) is among the first media and cultural studies monographs to give extended attention to the relationships between globalisation, media and the current generation of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Hassan's central argument is that the proliferation of ICTs has been driven by neoliberal ideologies – the belief system (which Hassan rejects) that markets are the best basis for organizing society. He sees network technologies as powerful agents of globalization and neoliberal hegemony. He says that these new media forms are radically intensive and extensive, inveigling markets into every part of daily life, and extending the reach of neoliberal values and practices into the furthest reaches of the planet. This tendency is allied with a revolution in how armed conflict is conducted and represented – the “wired world wars” – and with an intensification of government and corporate surveillance.

Hassan contrasts the emerging media model that is based on networked ICTs with the traditional mass media model of commercial newspapers, radio and TV. Mass media platforms are exclusive and highly visible stages on which confrontations between advertisers and consumers are played out. Media producers build audiences in order to sell them to marketers, while the audiences themselves resist being treated as a saleable mass. The proliferation of ICTs supersedes this model by flattening and homogenizing the spaces of culture and accelerating processes of consumption. The asymmetry of the media-culture dialectic starts to disappear, to be replaced by an ICT-driven absolute saturation of space and time by the market.

The chapter “Life.com” critiques the ethics and politics of ubiquitous mobile communication technologies in daily life. Using narrative scenarios as “thought-experiments,” Hassan attempts to illustrate how the very technologies and practices that companies such as Microsoft and research centers such as the MIT Media Lab claim are empowering – mobile phones, PDAs, e-commerce websites, commercial online learning – are in fact decreasing users’ agency and control over their lives. He compares the most network-connected people with metal balls in a pinball machine: “the faster you go, the more

buffeted about you are, the more hits you take and the more points you earn. It’s only a matter of time, though, before you go down . . . depression, anxiety, substance abuse, ill-health, divorce or simple burn-out.”

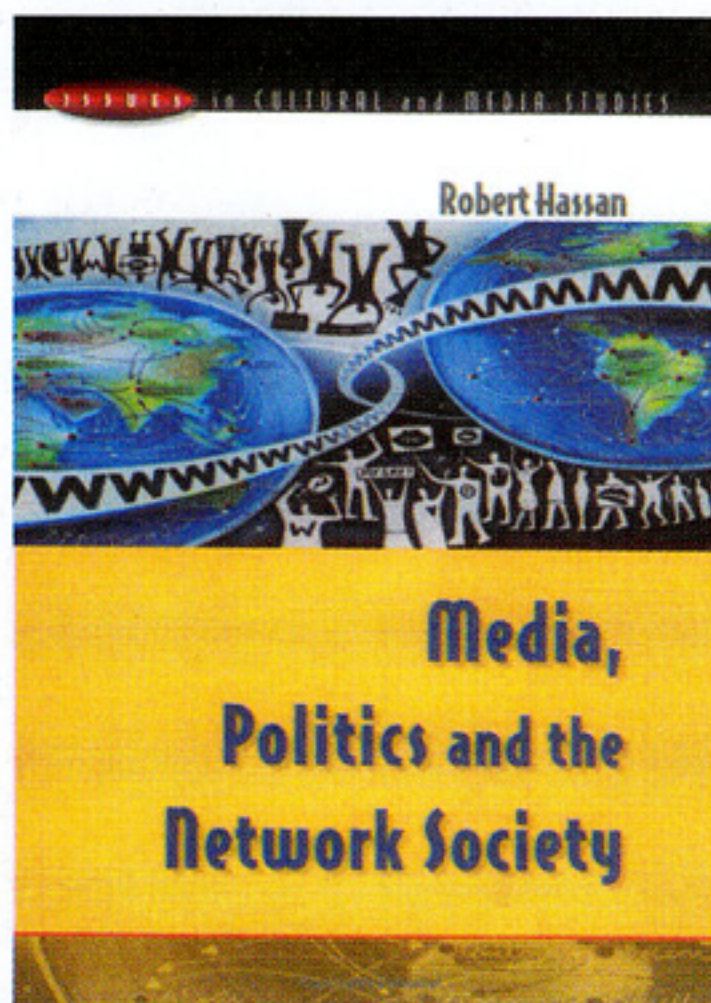
The final chapters of the book seek to identify sites of resistance to the hegemony of ICT-mediated neoliberal ideology. Those who take on the mantle as the antithesis in Hassan’s dialectic are those that turn the tools of neoliberalism against it: the global civil society movement and tactical media. He advocates the tactics of the anti-globalization protests such as in Seattle, Melbourne and Barcelona; the brand-bombing of *Adbusters* that uses the techniques of advertising to damage the image of high-profile corporations;

the movement that calls into question the genetic modification of food; blogs and protests against the second Gulf war; and campaigns against McDonald’s and other companies. However, he acknowledges that many of these seem to have limited political efficacy in the contemporary climate.

Indeed, Hassan’s argument offers little to move beyond the problems with critical dialectical thought. It remains tied to a rigid oppositional politics that can’t account for complicity with power, nor for the general lack of explicit opposition to neoliberalism from the majority of people, even among those who are most disadvantaged by it.

Hassan’s dramatic narrative of a dialectical confrontation between neoliberal ICTs and heroic resistance of the digitized civil society movements may appeal to many readers. The book does make some significant contributions to a media studies perspective on network society. However, it leaves large gaps for important work that might make closer and more careful readings of the increasingly multi-layered and interwoven networks of technical infrastructures, collective desires, multimodal discourses, political programs and global economics.

*Chris Cheser is Director of the Arts Informatics program at the University of Sydney. This review is adapted from Media International Australia.*







From the outset of Jonathan Demme's latest documentary *The Agronomist*, Haitian journalist and human-rights activist Jean Dominique reveals himself to be a man of unshakable intensity. His animated gestures, toothy grin and wide, piercing eyes, set him apart from most talking heads. But one is also struck by his wiry, almost emaciated frame, and it's clear early on in the film that he is as fragile as he is potent.

Dominique made his name as the owner and voice of Radio Haiti Inter. Demme – who is best known for directing *The Silence of the Lambs* – tells his story primarily through interviews carried out over a 15-year period with Dominique and his equally political wife Michèle Montas. A seductive, Haitian-rhythmed score by Wyclef Jean and Jerry "Wonda" Duplessis underpins the work.

The title of the film stems from Dominique's first career as an agronomist helping Haiti's poor farmers improve their yields. This experience reaffirmed the passion for his country that had been instilled in him by his father as a young boy in 1930s US-occupied Haiti. When American soldiers paraded by, his father told him to look away and stressed "You are Haitian . . . Never forget that . . . You are from this land." So Radio Haiti Inter was geared towards ordinary Haitians and became the first station to broadcast in their language, Creole. But even more than that, Dominique frequently used his broadcasts to go after Haiti's corrupt ruling class. The thugs in power responded with harassment and violence, and Dominique was driven into exile on more than one occasion. His return to Haiti after the fall of "Baby Doc" Duvalier in 1986 is one of the most poignant moments in the film, as 60,000 euphoric supporters swarm a visibly



thrilled Dominique at the airport.

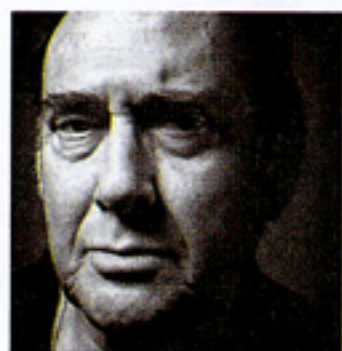
The hope that accompanied Dominique's return from exile was fleeting, however, and in 2000, Dominique was killed outside his radio station.

"The Agronomist" concludes with Montas delivering a charged tribute to her husband on his beloved radio station in which she declares "Jean Dominique is alive." Her assertion

echoes a statement made by Dominique before he was gunned down: "You cannot kill truth; you cannot kill justice; you cannot kill what we are fighting for." Jean's radio station was for the people. It spoke their language, told their stories and helped fight their struggle. It showed what media is supposed to be.

For more information about the film, visit [www.theagronomist.com](http://www.theagronomist.com).





*Playwright Harold Pinter's acceptance speech for the 2005 Nobel prize in literature raised a lot of eyebrows. News reports around the world focused on his rebuke of the Bush administration's campaign of disinformation, but the deeper message was lost in the wash. Pinter's comments were much more than a shot at the US, they were a reflection on the craft that he had devoted his whole life to: language, literature and the sacred importance of truth for the dignity of humanity. Here are some excerpts:*

What is true? What is false? Truth in drama is forever elusive. You never quite find it but the search for it is compulsive. The search is clearly what drives the endeavor. The search is your task. More often than not you stumble upon the truth in the dark, colliding with it or just glimpsing an image or a shape which seems to correspond to the truth, often without realising that you have done so. But the real truth is that there never is any such thing as one truth to be found in dramatic art. There are many. These truths challenge each other, recoil from each other, reflect each other, ignore each other, tease each other, are blind to each other. Sometimes you feel you have the truth of a moment in your hand, then it slips through your fingers and is lost. . . . The search for the truth can never stop. It cannot be adjourned, it cannot be postponed. It has to be faced, right there, on the spot.

Political language, as used by politicians, does not venture into [the territory of literature] since the majority of politicians, on the evidence available to us, are interested not in truth but in power and in the maintenance of that power. To maintain that power it is essential that people remain in ignorance, that they live in ignorance of the truth, even the truth of their own lives. What surrounds us therefore is a vast tapestry of lies, upon which we feed.

As every single person here knows, the justification for the invasion of Iraq was that Saddam Hussein

possessed a highly dangerous body of weapons of mass destruction, some of which could be fired in 45 minutes, bringing about appalling devastation. We were assured that was true. It was not true. We were told that Iraq had a relationship with al Qaeda and shared responsibility for the atrocity in New York of September 11th, 2001. We were assured that this was true. It was not true. We were told that Iraq threatened the security of the world. We were assured it was true. It was not true.

Everyone knows what happened in the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Europe during the post-war period: the systematic brutality, the widespread atrocities, the ruthless suppression of independent thought. All this has been fully documented and verified.

But my contention here is that the US crimes in the same period have only been superficially recorded, let alone documented, let alone acknowledged, let alone recognised as crimes at all. I believe this must be addressed and that the truth has considerable bearing on where the world stands now. Although constrained, to a certain extent, by the existence of the Soviet Union, the United States' actions throughout the world made it clear that it had concluded it had carte blanche to do what it liked.

When we look into a mirror we think the image that confronts us is accurate. But move a millimetre and the image changes. We are actually looking at a never-ending range of reflections. But sometimes a writer has to smash the mirror – for it is on the other side of that mirror that the truth stares at us.

I believe that despite the enormous odds which exist, unflinching, unswerving, fierce intellectual determination, as citizens, to define the real truth of our lives and our societies is a crucial obligation which devolves upon us all. It is in fact mandatory. If such a determination is not embodied in our political vision we have no hope of restoring what is so nearly lost to us – the dignity of man.







For my own pleasure, I recently translated a short poem that Simonides, better known for his Olympic victory odes, wrote about 2,500 years ago:

Since you are mortal,  
don't prophesy the quality of tomorrow's dawn,  
and when you meet the man of the year,  
don't try to read his life line,  
for swifter than a dragonfly,  
*pfft*  
a change.

Perhaps you recognize the argument. Simonides is restating what the Athenian legislator Solon once said: "Call no man happy before his death."

Solon had visited the great king Croesus, who asked him, "Who is the happiest man you have ever seen?" Solon did not name Croesus. When the king angrily demanded why he didn't rate, Solon responded, "Take 70 years as the span of a man's life: those 70 years contain 26,250 days [reckoned by the Greek calendar], and not a single one of them is like the next in what it brings. You can see from that, Croesus, what a chance thing life is. You are very rich, and you rule a numerous people; but the question you asked me I will not answer, until I know that you have died happily."

Croesus eventually lost his empire and his children, and died an unhappy man.

*When you meet the man of the year,  
don't try and read his life line.*

But then, in the second half of his little poem, in the midst of reflecting on the alarmingly unpredictable nature of human life, Simonides marvels at the speed and grace of dragonflies. He is not uttering a pessimistic cry of despair in the face of our mortality; he is counseling us to draw on the resources of wonder – on beauty – to sustain ourselves even as we confront necessity. For swifter than a dragonfly

*pfft*  
a change.

*Danielle Allen is Dean of Humanities at the University of Chicago. This was excerpted from a commencement address she gave at St. John's Collge, Santa Fe, May 22, 2004 and first appeared in The American Scholar.*





### CULTURAL CREATIVES

We are a loose global network of artists, activists, writers, students, educators and entrepreneurs. Our aim is to topple existing power structures and forge a new way of living in the 21st century. We want to change the way information flows, the way institutions wield power, the way the food, fashion, car and culture industries set their agendas. Above all we want to change the way we interact with the mass media and the way in which meaning is produced in our society.

### JOIN OUR NETWORK . . .

of 85,000 culture jammers and creatives around the world. Send a blank email to <creatives@adbusters.org> to receive newsletters and strategic updates.

### SUBSCRIBE TO OUR MAGAZINE

Online: <www.adbusters.org>  
Phone: +1.800.663.1243

### REPRINT OUR ARTICLES & IMAGES

Email: <reprints@adbusters.org>

### HELP US GROW

We're trying to launch a Spanish edition of *Adbusters* for distribution in Spain, Mexico and South America. Help us expand our international reach by calling Laura at 604.736.9401 or emailing <laura@adbusters.org>. Support our projects and campaigns at <www.adbusters.org/information/donate>.

## REVOLUTION VS. EVOLUTION

WE HAVE SO MANY MOVEMENTS, IDEAS AND DEMONSTRATIONS, BUT what is the most effective way to change our Western idea of living?

I would like to encourage evolution over revolution.

Evolution is defined as development, fruition, progress. Our society needs to develop by simplifying its lifestyle habits. However, this must be achieved in a progressive way. We cannot expect our planet to have a sudden "change of heart." We cannot look to a revolutionary turning point, a date to mark down in history. This change will come as an evolution.

First, we need to make the small adjustments that are possible for anyone to achieve. People are reluctant to change, especially drastically. They don't like inconvenience. And most don't want to be "revolutionaries." They figure that's for the hippies and anarchists. So we need to present relatively easy lifestyle choices that still have an impact. We need a shift of cultural normalcy. Here's how:

- You can't stop your friends from shopping, so encourage them to find trendy clothes second hand. Or, try designing and sewing your own.
- The idea of a Buy Nothing Christmas is too much for most people. So instead of drastically questioning the tradition, show how gifts can come from many sources. Encourage people to do their shopping at a fair trade store and support individuals rather than corporations. Or give the gift of a service. It could be a certificate for a haircut, or a massage from an independent business. Buy someone a monthly bus pass, or a tune-up for their bicycle.
- Bring your own bags next time you go shopping. Buy food in bulk, check that the food was grown in your region. Try that local grocer down the street, rather than the Big Box grocery store.
- When you go out for dinner, suggest a locally owned vegetarian eatery, rather than going to a chain restaurant.
- Send that anti-Walmart article you wrote not only to *Adbusters*, but also to *Canadian Living*, *O* magazine, *Reader's Digest* and other mainstream mags. The renowned architect and engineer Buckminster Fuller said that it's not a lack of resources causing poverty; it's ignorance. We need to inform people of these new cultural values.
- Encourage the coffee-addicts you know to use a go-cup, and find shops that sell fair trade coffee.
- When that appliance breaks, put some effort into having it fixed; rather than buying a new one. Save on the invested energy of new products.

These are the simple, everyday changes will become second nature for more and more people. Living simply shouldn't be a fad, it should be central to the ethos of Western culture. People need to stop seeing environmentalism as a movement and start accepting it as everyday life, a new cultural norm.

Carley Friesen



When I was a child, I watched way too much TV. The images penetrated my young mind, constantly manipulating my idea of “choice” and “opportunity” . . . until the Smurfs arrived.

The thing is, I didn't really like the show. I was a bit too old to care about the story and the animation didn't stand out. What kept me coming back was my aunt's reaction to the show. This was a woman who yelled at Krishnas for being hippies and didn't dare enter her church without a hat on. She believed that her son had been possessed by the devil when she found pot in his room. So she forced him into the military to atone for his evils, and then had her suspicions of his wickedness confirmed when he married a divorced German woman while stationed there. In short, she was a nut job. To her credit, though, she spent far more time than my parents did monitoring children's television programming in search of harmful content.

Upon my first viewing of the Smurfs, I went from individualist thinker to collectivist doer. I kid you not. Yes, I was only 10 years old, but my mind felt so free. It was the first time I was introduced to the idea of life on a continuum. The idea that we are only as advanced as the previous generations allows and only as strong as the weakest link in the community chain. Our potential from generation to generation was the

same, but the level of advancement was inextricably linked to the ability for prior knowledge to pass from one age to the next. The technology of today – that makes us seem so much more advanced than those in previous centuries – is only here because of the thousands upon millions of people who lived and learned before us.

At 10, I wasn't too familiar with the historical realities of those who had gone before me, but I understood my place for the first time. All of a sudden I felt free from the idea that we each have to be our own person and seek out our own personal destiny. The question of why I was here was answered. I was here to contribute to the process of life and occupy my space until the next piece of our history came along and took over. I told my aunt of this amazing realization and was visited by the coldest glare I had ever seen. She proclaimed that the commies of Hollywood were filling my brain with godless socialist propaganda as she attempted to slap the “red” right out of me.

When I explained to my parents where the Smurf community had led me they were taken aback, but proud of my thoughtfulness. From that day forward I was referred to as “our little Red.”

Thank you Papa Smurf, wherever you are.

*Elizabeth Andrew*

---

I got the new *Adbusters* Big Ideas of 2006 issue on the 25th anniversary of John Lennon's death. When reading both the subtle and not-so-subtle calls for violence that peppered the pages, I couldn't help but think of a Lennon quote I once read:

“We think that peace is only got by peaceful methods, and to fight the establishment with their own weapons is no good, because they always win, and they have been winning for thousands of years. They know how to play the game of violence, and it's easier for them when they can recognize you and shoot you.”

So I say to all those that want peace – do not create violence. Creating violence for peace is precisely the excuse President Bush uses. It is the excuse that Bin Laden uses. It is the excuse that Israel uses. It is the excuse the Palestinians use. It is the excuse ELF uses when they burn down labs.

If you truly want a peaceful Earth in every sense, you have to start within yourself. Before it is spread to every corner of the globe, peace must be harvested in the fields of personal action.

*Rob McVie*



It's a massive enterprise. For almost six years, specialists with the Music Genome Project have been poking and prodding the tunes we love in the most comprehensive analysis of music ever undertaken. They've listened to over 300,000 songs, distilled them to their most elemental forms, and catalogued 400 little details – melody, harmony, instrumentation, rhythm, vocals, lyrics, you name it. Once they've codified a song's characteristics, they feed it into a search engine – musical 'connective-tissue' – that links the subject to similar songs. The idea is that you, the listener, will be able to insert your favorite music and the machine will spit out other tunes that

you'll want to groove to.

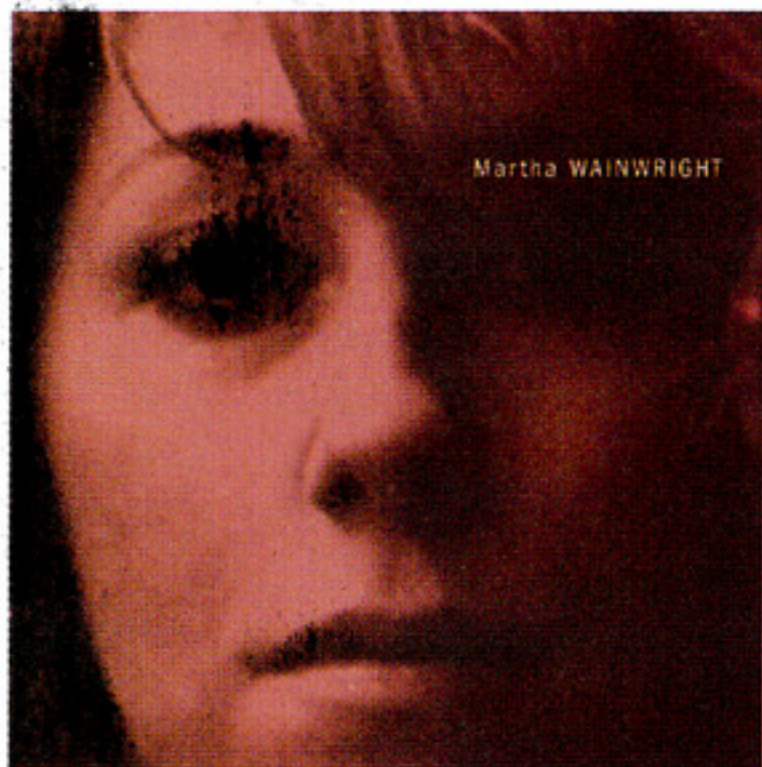
Sounds great right? Your very own radio feed suited to your specific interests – familiar favorites and stuff you wouldn't have come across otherwise. Indeed, the project's creators insist that their research is by music-lovers and for music-lovers. But aren't we sullyng the sacred language of music when we size it up and compartmentalize it? Do we really want to subject it to the rhythmic equivalent to DNA research? William Wordsworth warned us about putting our faith in science and technology: "Our meddling intellect misshapes the beauteous forms of things; we murder to dissect."



## M.I.A. – ARULAR

If you've so far avoided getting drawn into a debate about the lyrics of Maya Arulpragasam – more commonly known as M.I.A. – then it may be time to finally hop on board. Coming straight out of left field with a debut album full of crazily danceable yet proudly political songs, M.I.A. deftly staged 2005's most spectacular mainstream music coup: opening for simpleton pop princess Gwen Stefani on a North American tour, while simultaneously having her video for the song "Sunshowers" banned by MTV when she refused to remove its references to the P.L.O.

The London-based musician is not quite a full-fledged household name, yet, but if the number of times that *Arular* featured on January top-ten lists is any indication, it's only a matter of time. Infectious, challenging and whole lot of fun.



## MARTHA WAINWRIGHT

Martha Wainwright's critically acclaimed self-titled debut is a beautiful, bipolar breakaway from her family's dynastic tradition.

The daughter of folk royalty Loudon Wainwright III and Kate McGarrigle, and the sister of Rufus, Wainwright eloquently severs the family ties in one neat act with "Bloody Mother Fucking Asshole" – dutifully dedicated to her absentee father.

From the outset, a cigarettes-and-honey voice enables Wainwright to coat her songs with a hardened vulnerability that seems to be prepared to confess all. By twisting the folk tradition she was raised with until it snaps to form something raw, fresh and downright primal, she produces a work of schizophrenic intensity, combining vulnerable laments with tracks of fiery confidence. And, because Wainwright's nervous, slightly raspy voice has the capacity to add simmering tension in places and ball-breaking vitriol in others, the listener is left constantly on edge as she turns otherwise sweet nothings like "Far Away," into beautiful, wonderful Carpenters' songs gone wrong.

It's the story of her twenties, and you know that she means every word; this is a catharsis that will stand up to the test of time – and apart from the family tradition.

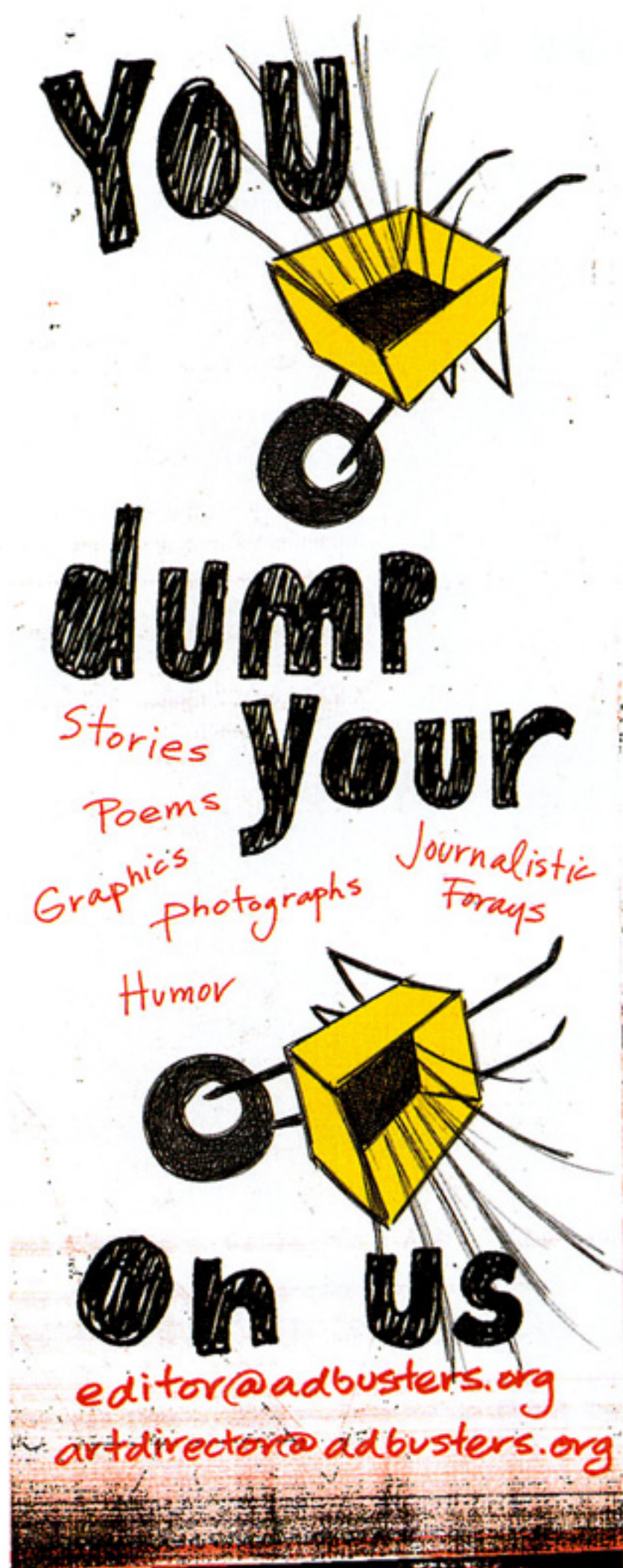




*Shedboatshed* (Mobile Architecture No. 2) had its beginnings when Turner-Prize-winning artist Simon Starling spotted a slightly dilapidated wooden shed on the banks of the Rhine. After dismantling the shed, Starling used the planks to construct a traditional boat, which he then navigated down the river to Basel, Switzerland. Finally, the boat was dismantled and re-fashioned into a shed.

Starling's work, which often rests upon the act of pilgrimage, offers a kind of quiet counterpoint to the mania of modernity and mass production. Like other artists who focus on the process of creation rather than the final product, Starling's shed is clearly not tailor-made for easy recuperation as an art-world commodity. Which is not to say that it won't be – it definitely will. It's just comforting to know that Starling's interests rest elsewhere.





Some years ago, I passed by the window of a trendy art gallery and noticed what I thought was a new display: a white-bearded man in scruffy clothes was perfectly posed in the center of the window, sleeping. Now here, for a change, was an arresting and exciting conceptual piece. The only question in my mind was whether this was an actor or an actual homeless person. I hoped it was the latter, since the money he'd be paid as fee would help keep him out of a shelter, for a while at least.

It turns out I was giving the curators too much credit for inventiveness. Two hours later when I returned, the display window was empty; the white-bearded gentleman had been asked to move on. I've often mulled over the implications of this show that never was. Wouldn't it be an interesting blend of art and social conscience? Imagine a worldwide movement to press art councils to fund a project of this kind in cities everywhere. It could be a month-long exhibition incorporating members of the host city's own homeless population. In addition to sleeping in doorways and window displays while the gallery was open, participants would be walking/talking art, circulating among the patrons, telling of their childhood, hopes for the future, current situation and prospects. It would be every kind of art at once: visual, text-based, theatrical, experimental, improv. City by city, with a few good camera operators, you could generate some astounding video.

I'd call it the "Universal Homeless Project." And what legitimate objection could be made? The only one I can think of is that it might in some way degrade the homeless participants – though I would argue that society has already decisively and sufficiently accomplished that. But wouldn't they be valued as *objets d'art* more than they are presently?

Who knows? In some small way, it might actually make a difference.

Martin Heavisides

## ART CONTRIBUTORS



**HE SEN (B. 1968)**  
Girl and Toy, 2005.  
Oil on canvas  
59 x 78 3/4 in (150 x 200 cm)  
Courtesy, Goedhuis Contemporary  
New York, New York



**KRISTOPHER GRUNERT**  
Grunert Imaging  
grunertimaging.com  
Vancouver, Canada



**MILES ALDRIDGE**  
milesaldrige.com



**JANS MUSKEE**  
Hanging in the air, 1997.  
Courtesy of Aeroplastics  
Contemporary,  
Brussels & Flatland,  
Utrecht



**LAUREN GREENFIELD**  
Privileged youth in Milan at a popular  
kids' hangout shopping area,  
San Babila Square/VII ©



**PETER MENZEL**  
© 2005.  
menzelphoto.com



**MARK BRYAN**  
artofmarkbryan.com



**WINSTON SMITH**  
"Pax Americana", 1987.  
© All Rights Reserved.  
winstonsmith.com



**MARIKO MORI**  
Tea Ceremony III, 1994.  
Duraflex, wood,  
pewter frame  
4' x 5' x 2"



**EDOUARD SALIER**  
FLESH, France, 2005.  
Copyright Autour de Minuit Productions  
edouardsalier.com / strikebackfilms.com  
American premiere at Resfest / resfest.com



# COMING IN FEBRUARY



## ORDER IT ONLINE AT [ADBUSTERS.ORG](http://adbusters.org) OR WATCH FOR IT IN STORES THIS SPRING

A radical new aesthetic vision by Adbusters founder Kalle Lasn.

In the battle for a new kind of meaning, *Design Anarchy* is over 400 pages without precedent.

*Design Anarchy* takes an unflinching look at contemporary art and design, implicating its seemingly innocuous practices in crimes against our culture and our planet. Equal parts memoir, manifesto, scrapbook and revolutionary design manual, this book is an urgent call for artists, designers, architects and communicators to re-engage with the world, to explore their role in the pollution and future redemption of our mental and physical commons.

Richly illustrated with highlights from 15 years of *Adbusters* design activism, *Design Anarchy* examines the historical roots of commercial design culture, the impact of the post-modern sensibility and the problem of aesthetic recuperation. It also revisits and updates true cost design and psycho design, two truly revolutionary schools of design practice and thought.

Featuring the work of Banksy, Tibor Kalman, Jeff Wall, Barbara Kruger, Chris Woods, Andy Goldsworthy, Edward Burtynsky, Ryan McGinness, John Goto, Mieke Gerritzen, Gregory Crewdson ...

**HARDCOVER • 416 PAGES • FULL COLOUR • 25.5 CM X 28 CM (10.5" X 11.5")**  
**1200 COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS, ILLUSTRATIONS, SPOOF ADS & MORE**





Life on the open road is the essence of freedom. To have the courage to smash the chains with which modern life has weighted us (under the pretext that it was offering us more liberty), then take up the symbolic stick and bundle, and get out!

To the one who understands the

value and delectable flavor of solitary freedom (and true freedom depends on solitude) the act of leaving is the most courageous and most beautiful.

An egotistical happiness, possibly. But for him who relishes the flavor, happiness.

To be alone, to be poor in needs,

to be ignored, a stranger at home and everywhere, and to walk, great and by oneself, toward the conquest of the world.

*Isabelle Eberhardt, "Algeria 1900," excerpted from In search of the world: a traveller's almanac*





You boycott products made by the corporations you hate. You cut meat and dairy out of your diet because you're appalled at the way factory-farmed animals are treated. You avoid goods made with sweatshop labor. But you want to take it one step further. You want to **defy** the entire system. You want to eliminate waste by consuming it. You want to be a freegan.

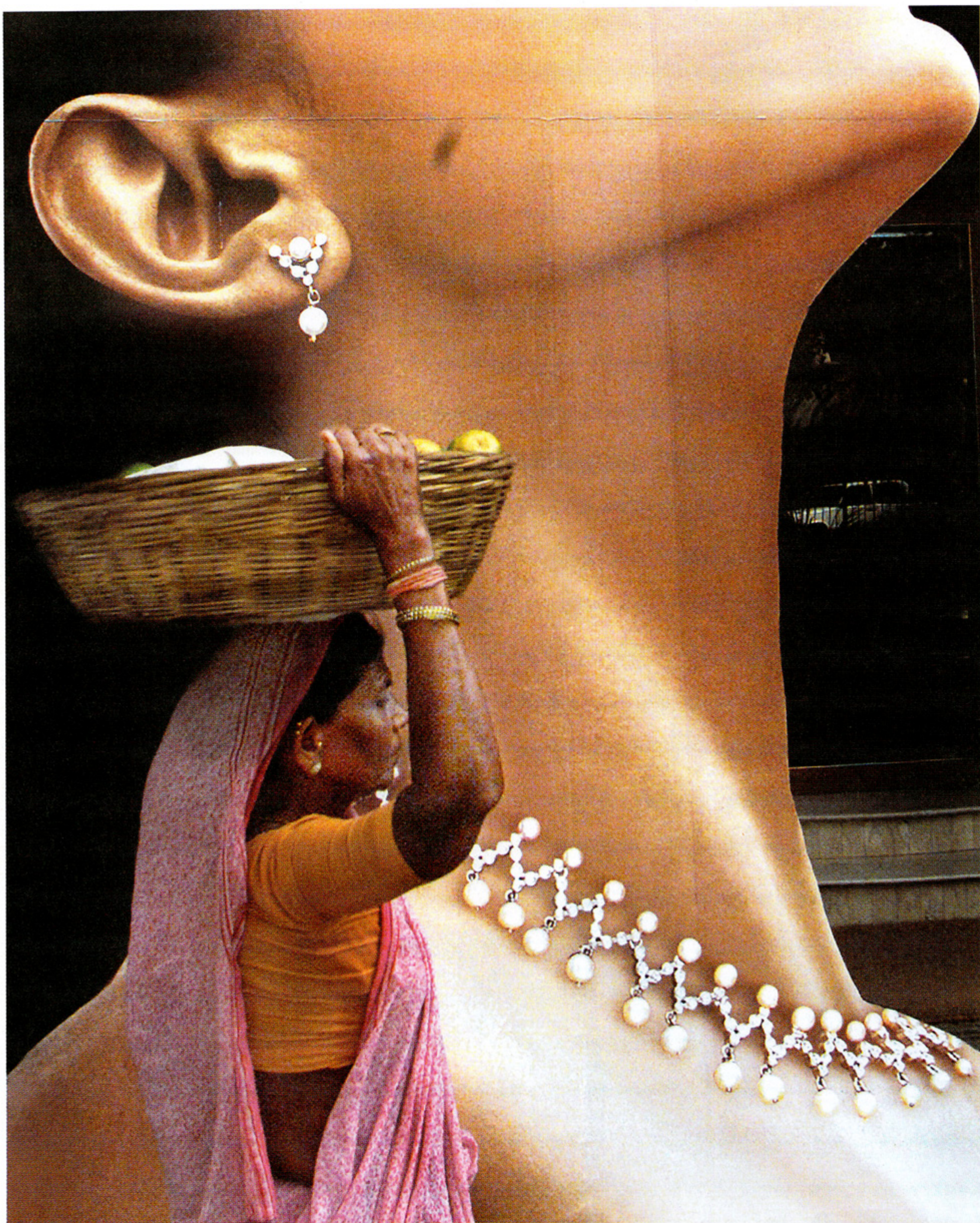
That's right, combine 'free' and 'vegan.' It means that you personally are not creating a demand for products that exploit people, animals, or the Earth. If it's in a dumpster, however, it's fair game. You eat whatever you find. Call it "urban foraging" or "dumpster diving." **Whatever.** It's partially about living on the cheap, but it's more accurately a **political** philosophy. The idea is simply to try not to buy anything. **Period.** The ultimate boycott of a throwaway culture. That doesn't mean going without. You'd be amazed all the goodies that get pitched. Electronics, clothes, food, you name it. And don't be fooled by our society's aversion towards garbage. A lot of the stuff you'll find in dumpsters is **safe**, clean, and perfectly good to use or eat.

So lift up the lid and peek inside. It's easier than you think.

The known office of publication is Adbusters ISSN (0847-9047) which is published bimonthly at 1243 West 7th Ave., Vancouver, BC V6H 1B7. Mailed in the USA by Quad/Graphics, W224 N3322 Duplainville Road, Pewaukee, WI 53072 as Periodical Postage (#022856) at Pewaukee, WI. **POSTMASTER:** send address changes to Adbusters Media Foundation PMB 658, 250 H St., Blaine, WA 98230-9936. Printed in the USA.

Single subscription price: \$7.95 - Annual Subscription Price: USA and Canada: \$35, International \$40 - Two Year Subscription Price: USA and Canada: \$48, International \$60.





Mumbai, India.





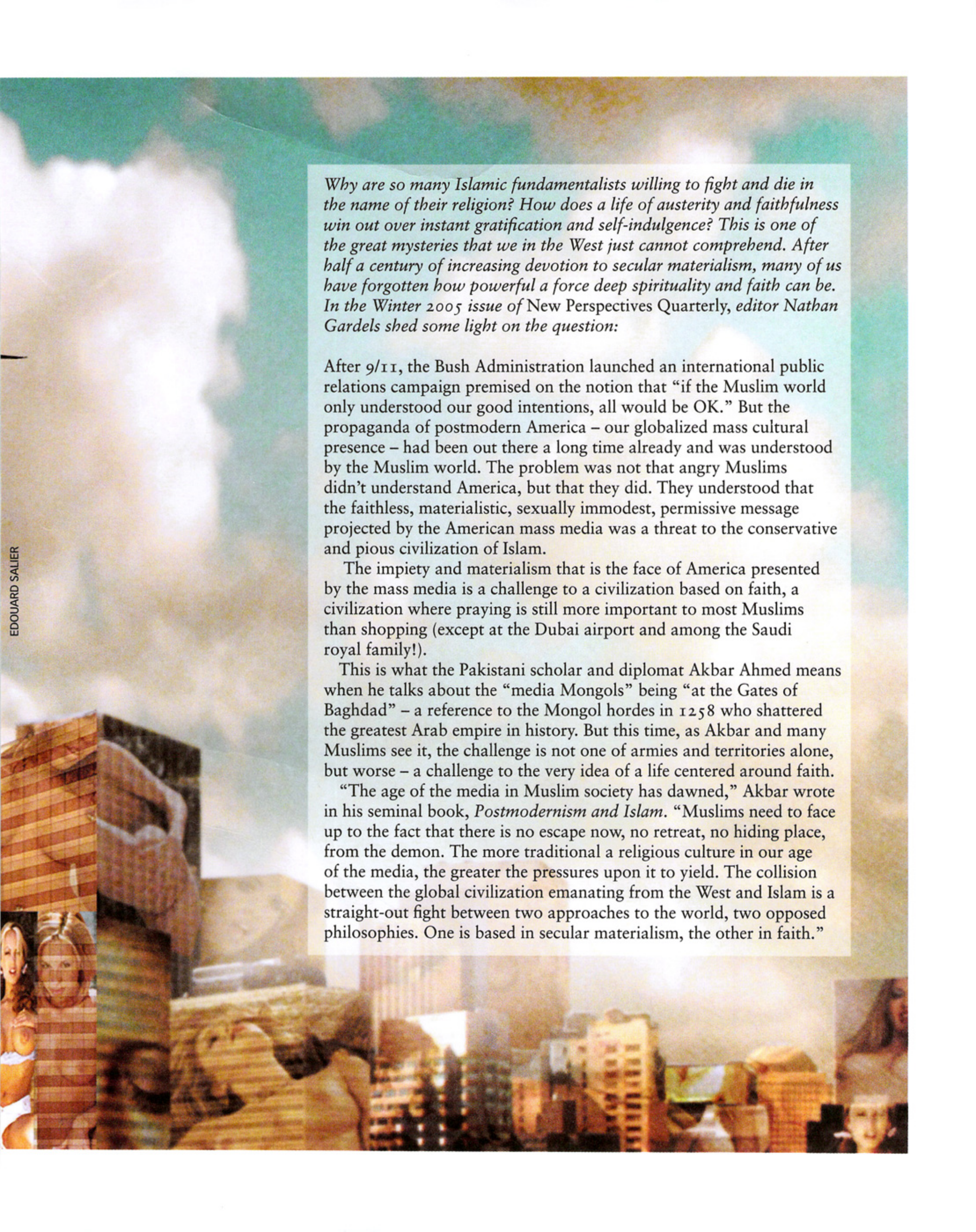


SPIRITUAL POLLUTION



Video still from *Flesh*, by Edouard Salier





*Why are so many Islamic fundamentalists willing to fight and die in the name of their religion? How does a life of austerity and faithfulness win out over instant gratification and self-indulgence? This is one of the great mysteries that we in the West just cannot comprehend. After half a century of increasing devotion to secular materialism, many of us have forgotten how powerful a force deep spirituality and faith can be. In the Winter 2005 issue of New Perspectives Quarterly, editor Nathan Gardels shed some light on the question:*

After 9/11, the Bush Administration launched an international public relations campaign premised on the notion that "if the Muslim world only understood our good intentions, all would be OK." But the propaganda of postmodern America – our globalized mass cultural presence – had been out there a long time already and was understood by the Muslim world. The problem was not that angry Muslims didn't understand America, but that they did. They understood that the faithless, materialistic, sexually immodest, permissive message projected by the American mass media was a threat to the conservative and pious civilization of Islam.

The impiety and materialism that is the face of America presented by the mass media is a challenge to a civilization based on faith, a civilization where praying is still more important to most Muslims than shopping (except at the Dubai airport and among the Saudi royal family!).

This is what the Pakistani scholar and diplomat Akbar Ahmed means when he talks about the "media Mongols" being "at the Gates of Baghdad" – a reference to the Mongol hordes in 1258 who shattered the greatest Arab empire in history. But this time, as Akbar and many Muslims see it, the challenge is not one of armies and territories alone, but worse – a challenge to the very idea of a life centered around faith.

"The age of the media in Muslim society has dawned," Akbar wrote in his seminal book, *Postmodernism and Islam*. "Muslims need to face up to the fact that there is no escape now, no retreat, no hiding place, from the demon. The more traditional a religious culture in our age of the media, the greater the pressures upon it to yield. The collision between the global civilization emanating from the West and Islam is a straight-out fight between two approaches to the world, two opposed philosophies. One is based in secular materialism, the other in faith."





# WE WANT YOU TO USE LESS OIL

We are in a strange predicament. For decades, we have controlled the world's most precious natural resource. We have explored. We have gambled. We have drilled. The oil has flowed. And so have the profits.

But after a century of encouraging you to guzzle our product with abandon, we are confronted by intractable Reality. The oil will run dry. Even at this very moment, when the climbing price of oil keeps us more flush than ever before, we know the harsh truth of why the prices climb. The oil will run dry.

And so we have come to a conclusion, previously unthinkable: we can no longer be oil companies. Oil can no longer be our product.

Eons ago, the Earth elected to set aside a mysterious gift. For millions of years, this gift waited. Finally, we unwrapped it, and revelled in its wonders. But there are no more gifts of oil forthcoming.

From now on, we are energy companies. Energy is our product. And we want you to use less oil.

**GLOBAL ENERGY CONSORTIUM**